



Policy on Concussion Procedure and Protocol

Concussion:

A traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. Medically, a concussion is a complex, pathophysiological event to the brain that is induced by trauma which may or may not involve a loss of consciousness (LOC). Concussion results in a constellation of physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep-related symptoms. Signs or symptoms may last from several minutes to days, weeks, months or even longer in some cases

Pennsylvania Senate Bill No. 200, known as the “Safety in Youth Sports Act,” was signed into law 2011, establishes standards for managing concussions and traumatic brain injuries to student athletes. Whereas Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer serves as the governing body for the sport in this region for non-scholastic soccer, our association will align and support the procedures within this law to ensure the safety of the children playing soccer within our boundaries.

Section 3 (g:) Other youth athletic activities.--The sponsors of youth athletic activities not specifically addressed by this act are encouraged to follow the guidance set forth in this act.

Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer member leagues and affiliates will follow the guidance set forth in this act. Our association’s members and affiliates shall be required to provide educational materials to their members- including but not limited to coaches, players and parents. Materials may be in electronic or traditional formats. Best efforts should be made to educate and test all coaches within the next 6 months providing the free options available by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The enforcement of these procedures is remanded to the local entity, the league or club.

Any player exhibiting the signs or symptoms of a concussion or traumatic brain injury while participating in sanctioned soccer activity (training, games, tournaments, scrimmages) shall be removed by the coach from participation at that time. In addition, coaches should not allow a child to participate if they are aware of a concussion received from another activity, outside of their direct authority.

The coach shall not return a child to soccer participation until the child is evaluated and cleared for return to participation in writing by an a licensed physician who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions or a licensed or certified health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and designated by such licensed physician.

In accordance with the bill, the governing bodies (in our case, the club) shall institute minimum penalties for a coach found in violation of this policy

- (1) For a first violation, suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season.
- (2) For a second violation, suspension from all soccer activity for the remainder of the season and for the next season.
- (3) For a third violation, permanent suspension from all soccer activity.

Any member or affiliate found in violation of these policies shall be addressed by the Board of Directors and potentially subject to a hearing.

CONCUSSION SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, AND MANAGEMENT AT TRAINING AND COMPETITIONS

Step 1:

Did a concussion occur?

Evaluate the player and note if any of the following signs and/or symptoms are present:

- (1) Dazed look or confusion about what happened.
- (2) Memory difficulties.
- (3) Neck pain, headaches, nausea, vomiting, double vision, blurriness, ringing noise or sensitive to sounds.
- (4) Short attention span; Can't keep focused.
- (5) Slow reaction time, slurred speech, bodily movements are lagging; fatigue, and slowly answer questions or has difficulty answering questions.
- (6) Abnormal physical and/or mental behavior.
- (7) Coordination skills are behind, ex: balancing, dizziness, clumsiness, reaction time.

Step 2:

Is emergency treatment needed?

This would include the following scenarios:

- (1) Spine or neck injury or pain.
- (2) Behavior patterns change, unable to recognize people/places, less responsive than usual.
- (3) Loss of consciousness.
- (4) Headaches that worsen
- (5) Seizures
- (6) Very drowsy, can't be awakened
- (7) Repeated vomiting
- (8) Increasing confusion or irritability

- (9) Weakness, numbness in arms and legs

Step 3:

If a possible concussion occurred, but no emergency treatment is needed, what should be done now?

Focus on these areas every 5-10 min for the next 1 - 2 hours, without returning to any activities:

- (1) Balance, movement.
- (2) Speech.
- (3) Memory, instructions, and responses.
- (4) Attention on topics, details, confusion, ability to concentrate.
- (5) State of consciousness
- (6) Mood, behavior, and personality
- (7) Headache or “pressure” in head
- (8) Nausea or vomiting
- (9) Sensitivity to light and noise

Players shall not re-enter competition, training, or partake in any activities for at least 24 hours. Even if there are no signs or symptoms after 15-20 min, activity should not be taken by the player.

Step 4:

A player diagnosed with a possible concussion may return to play only after release from a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy specializing in concussion treatment and management.

Step 5:

If there is a possibility of a concussion, do the following:

- (1) The attached Concussion Notification Form is to be filled out in duplicate and signed by a team official of the player’s team.
- (2) If the player is able to do so, have the player sign and date the Form. If the player is not able to sign, note on the player’s signature line “unavailable”.
- (3) If a parent/legal guardian of the player is present, have the parent/legal guardian sign and date the Form, and give the parent/legal guardian one of the copies of the completed Form. If the parent/legal guardian is not present, then the team official is responsible for notifying the parent/legal guardian ASAP by phone or email and then submitting the Form to the parent/legal guardian by email or mail. When the parent/legal guardian is not present, the team official must make a record of how and when the parent/legal guardian was notified. The notification will include a request for the parent/legal guardian to provide confirmation and completion of the Concussion Notification Form whether in writing or electronically.
- (4) The team official must also get the player’s pass from the referee, and attach it to the copy of the Form retained by the team.