

Plymouth High School

Procedure for Head Injury in Athletics

The Plymouth High School Department of Athletics, under advisement from the school's athletic trainer and team physicians, has developed the following procedure to follow when a student athlete has suffered a head injury where a concussion can be suspected.

1. Student-Athletes and parents will be given an information sheet on concussions and will need to return a signed form stating that they have received the information before the student-athlete can participate in any intramural or interscholastic athletics activities. Plymouth High School will use two forms from the Center for Disease Control.
 - a. Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports, A Fact Sheet for Athletes_a
 - b. Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports, A Fact Sheet for Parents_b
2. If an athlete appears to have any signs or symptoms of a concussion during a sporting event they should be immediately removed from participation in that event. The coach should call the school's medical professional for further evaluation of the injury.
3. The medical professional doing the evaluation will use the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, as well as mental and physical tests to determine if the injury is a concussion. According to new Indiana Code (IC 20-34-7_c), a concussion will be suspected if the mechanism of injury and even one sign or symptom of a concussion exists.
4. If the evaluation reveals that a concussion should be suspected, the student-athlete will be removed from participation until written release is obtained from a licensed health care provider trained in the recognition and evaluation of concussions.
 - a. Plymouth High School is fortunate to have local physicians that volunteer to see kids in the training room at the school. These doctors are able to evaluate concussions and are able to release the student-athletes when they are ready. To set up an appointment with one of the team physicians contact the athletic training room at PHS. Understand that depending on the severity of the injury the physicians may need to refer the student-athlete to a clinic or outside facility (including his or her own) for further evaluation. When referred outside of PHS standard medical charges will apply.
5. Plymouth High School will only accept releases from Physicians (MD or DO), Nurse Practitioners, or Physician Assistants per IC 20-34-7 and Indiana High School Athletic Association policy.
 - a. Written release from a listed provider does not automatically release the student-athlete to participation. The medical professionals associated with Plymouth High School reserve the right to withhold athletic participation if they feel that the student-athlete is not healthy enough to return to activity.
6. All student-athletes participating in a contact or limited-contact sport, as defined by the American Academy of Pediatrics_d, are required to take a baseline neuro-cognitive exam (Plymouth uses ImpACT_e). This will be offered during the summer months every year to incoming freshmen and junior students.
7. The following procedure will be followed at Plymouth High School for a student athlete to return to full participation after a concussion is suspected due to a head injury:
 - a. The student-athlete will retake the ImpACT test 24-72 hours after injury and the results will be compared to the baseline scores. This will allow for proper diagnosis and a safe return to play recommendation on an individual basis. If the athlete does not reach the baseline threshold another ImpACT test will be administered when the athlete is symptom-free but no sooner than 48 hours after the last test.
8. Once the student-athlete has passed the ImpACT test, has a written release, and is free of symptoms related to a concussion a return-to-play protocol will be started. The return to play activities are as follows:
 - a. Day 1 – Stationary Bike, Jogging exercises
 - b. Day 2 – Running, Non-contact, Sport Specific drills
 - c. Day 3 – Return to full-contact practices
 - d. Day 4 – Return to game competition

(**Note:** if the athlete gets a note from a medical provider that states no concussion is suspected and they have a normal ImpACT test then they will be allowed to return to full participation immediately)

The athlete will progress in the steps each day as long as they continue to be symptom-free. The athlete is only allowed to complete one step in a 24-hour period. If symptoms return the athlete will sit out for at least 24 hours or until symptoms are gone and will then retry the same step over again.

References:

- a. http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/pdf/athletes_Eng.pdf
- b. http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/pdf/parents_Eng.pdf
- c. <http://www.in.gov/legislative/ic/code/title20/ar34/ch7.html>
- d. http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/121/4/841/T1_expansion.html
- e. <http://www.impacttest.com/>