

Educator's Guide to Concussions in the Classroom

How School Staff can help with Student/ Athletes with Concussions:

Symptoms	Interventions
<p>Physical:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache/Nausea • Dizziness • Balance Problems • Light Sensitivity (photophobia) • Blurred Vision • Noise sensitivity • Neck Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet room/environment • Seated near front of room, by a wall and away from entrance/windows, if possible • Strategic rest/scheduled breaks during the day • More frequent breaks in the classroom • Remove from PE, recess & dance classes without penalty • Limit backpack weight, stair use and playing of band instruments • Sunglasses / Anti-glare glasses / hats
<p>Cognitive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty or poor concentration • Difficulty remembering information (especially new material) • Mentally foggy • Slowed processing of information • May have difficulty with small print • Trouble planning/organizing materials • Difficulties with visual-spatial information • Slow reaction time • Poor impulse control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit screen time • Provide both spoken & written instructions • Speak slowly & clearly; repeat complex sentences • Workload reduction in the classroom/homework • Early passing time between classes • Adjust or extend due dates • Exempt or postpone large tests/projects/standardized test • Allow student to audit classwork • Allow for "buddy notes" • Alternative testing (i.e. reader, books on tape, quiet testing room, etc) • Allow for extra time for work and tests • Do not penalize for work not completed during recovery
<p>Emotional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More emotional • Nervous/Agitated • Sad • Angry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help staff understand that mental fatigue can manifest in emotional meltdowns • Allow student to remove himself/herself to de-escalate
<p>Maintenance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentally fatigued • Drowsy • Sleeping too much • Sleeping too little • Cannot initiate/maintain sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for rest breaks during school time • Allow student to start school later in the day • Allow student to leave school early

MISC INFORMATION:

- Athletes with a history of concussions or neurological disorders tend to take longer to recover
- Cognitive weaknesses associated with a history of a learning disability or ADHD tend to be exacerbated following a mild head injury
- Their cognitive symptoms can be more severe
- Designate a “contact person” for family to communicate concerns regarding child’s school performance and symptoms

WHEN TO RETURN THE STUDENT TO SCHOOL:

The current recommendation is to not return a student to school unless they can **sustain their attention for approximately 45 minutes** without any return of physical symptoms.

