



Phoenix Rugby Club: Concussion Policy & Awareness

Phoenix Rugby Club takes player health and welfare seriously and operates under USA Rugby's strict concussion policy:

1. If a player shows symptoms of concussion before, during or after a match, that player must be removed from play immediately, not to return during that match. No Exceptions.
2. The player needs to be evaluated by appropriate medical staff. Best practice would be evaluation by a medical physician who has training in concussion evaluation and management. A player must do this before returning to play rugby in any form.
3. If a concussion is diagnosed, that player must sit out of activity with full rest for the minimum guidelines listed below: **Youth and HS players (18 and under)** - 2 weeks (14 full days) AND be symptom free before beginning the 5 day Graduated Return to Play Protocols. Not returning to contact rugby before GRTP fully complete and symptom free.
4. Once a player is cleared by a physician, they should be closely monitored for any lingering symptoms by coaches, parents, teammates and medical staff and be removed from play immediately if symptoms occur.

Know the 5 R's: USA Rugby's policy requires that ALL rugby players, staff, parents, referees, volunteers, and even fans follow these five basic steps when dealing with suspected concussions:

1. **Recognize** - Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion so you understand when an athlete might have a suspected concussion.
2. **Remove** - If an athlete has a concussion or even a suspected concussion he or she must be removed from play immediately.
3. **Refer** - Once removed from play, the player should be referred immediately to a qualified healthcare professional who is trained in evaluating and treating concussions.
4. **Recover** - Full recovery from the concussion is required before return to play is authorized. This includes being *symptom-free*. Rest and some specific treatment options are critical for the health of the injured participant.
5. **Return** - In order for safe return to play in rugby, the athlete must be symptom-free and cleared in writing by a qualified healthcare professional who is trained in evaluating and treating concussions. USA Rugby strongly recommends that the athlete complete the GRTP (Graduated Return to Play) protocol.

For USA Rugby's [Step by Step Guide When Someone Suffers a Concussion](#) as well as additional concussion resources: www.usarugby.org/concussions & choa.org/concussion

Player Sign & Date: _____
Parent Sign & Date: _____

What is a concussion?

It is a type of brain injury caused by trauma. It can be caused by a hard bump on or blow to or around the head, which causes the brain to move quickly inside the head. You do not have to lose consciousness to have a concussion. If a concussion is not properly treated, it can make symptoms last longer and delay recovery. A second head trauma before recovery could lead to more serious injuries.

What are the signs and symptoms?

There are many signs and symptoms linked with concussion. Your child may not have any symptoms until a few days after the injury. Signs are conditions observed by other people and symptoms are feelings reported by the athlete.

Signs observed by others

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Moves clumsily
- Forgets plays
- Answers questions slowly
- Is unsure of game or opponent
- Shows behavior or personality changes

Symptoms reported by athlete

- Headache
- Fuzzy vision
- Nausea
- Feeling foggy
- Dizziness
- Concentration problems

What should you do if you suspect a concussion?*

- Do not let your child play with a head injury.
- Check on your child often after the injury for new or worsening signs or symptoms. If the symptoms are getting worse, take him to the nearest Emergency Department.
- Take your child to the doctor for any symptom of a concussion.
- Do not give your child pain medications without talking to your child's doctor.
- Your child should stop all athletic activity until his doctor says it is OK. Your child must stay out of play until he is cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.
- Educate your child on concussions and why he cannot play until the symptoms are gone. Your child will need a gradual return to school and activities.
- Tell your child's coaches, school nurses and teachers if he has a concussion.

****In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.***

Warning signs

Call your child's doctor right away if he has:

- New signs that his doctor does not know about
- Continued vomiting
- Existing signs that get worse
- Weakness in the arms or legs
- Headaches that get worse
- Trouble knowing people or places
- A seizure
- Slurred speech
- Neck pain
- Loss of consciousness
- Tiredness or is hard to wake
- Blood or fluid coming from nose or ear
- A large bump or bruise on scalp, especially in infant younger than 12 months