

Concussions 101

Per Indiana Code 20-34-7, any athlete who is suspected of suffering a concussion may not return to play until the student has been evaluated by a **licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and head injuries** and receives written clearance to return to play from the health care provider who evaluated the student athlete.

Concussion Management at HSJH:

1. **ImPACT testing:** Student athletes in VB, FB, Cheer, Basketball, Wrestling and Track/Field are tested at the beginning of the season. Test is recommended every 2 years.
ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) is the first, most-widely used, and most scientifically validated computerized concussion evaluation system. ImPACT was developed to provide useful information to assist qualified practitioners in making sound return to play decisions following concussions.
2. **“Head Event”:** If a student athlete reports symptoms or a coach observes any signs of a concussion following a “head event” (direct blow to the head or acceleration or deceleration; ie whip lash) he/she will be taken out of the practice/game. The student athlete will not be allowed to return to play until they are evaluated by a **licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and head injuries** and receives written clearance to return to play from the health care provider who evaluated the student athlete.
A list of local concussion clinicians can be found under the “documents and forms” tab on the athletic website.
3. **Return to play:** Student athlete must provide the coach or Athletic Director with a completed “Concussion Evaluation and Release To Play Form” indicating they are cleared for activity in order to return. This form can be provided to you by one of our coaches or found on our Athletic website. The reoccurrence of any signs or symptoms will result in the student athlete being removed from activity again.

Important Points for Parents and Athletes:

1. **Communicate, communicate, communicate!**
You cannot see a concussion. Some signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after. Some symptoms include nausea, headaches, dizziness, mood swings, trouble concentrating on school work, etc. We encourage athletes and their parents to seek medical attention and tell all coaches immediately if they are symptomatic. It’s better to miss 1 game, than the whole season or possibly more.
2. **How to find a physician who is licensed to treat a concussion...**
Ask a coach or Athletic Director to put you in contact with the athletic trainer for a list of physicians who are trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
3. **A student athlete who “just got their bell rung” or “dinged”** will be treated the same as someone who is suspected of a concussion and will be removed from activity. *When in doubt, we will sit them out! We care about the safety and well-being of our student athletes and will not put their futures at risk.*
4. *****There is no such thing as a concussion proof helmet.** All of our football helmets are 5-star rated helmets and NOCSAE certified (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment). Also, there is no substantial data to support the notion that certain mouth guards help reduce the risks of concussions. However, mouth guards are very effective at preventing dental injuries and are required to be worn by all football players.
5. *****Policy on players wearing their own helmets:** If a parent insists that their child wear their own personal helmet, that helmet must be less than 2 years old and NOCSAE certified for use for the current football season. It must be a plain white helmet with a royal blue facemask. The Athletic Director must approve the helmet at the player/parent meeting prior to the 1st day of practice. No exceptions.