



## Concussions:

### What Every Youth Sports Parent Needs to Know

- The signs of concussion (those observed by coaches, parents and teammates) and the symptoms of concussion (feelings or problems experienced and reported by your child)(see Smart-Teams handout or smartphone app)
- The critical importance of encouraging your child to honestly self-report experiencing concussion symptoms to allow immediate removal from practice or game action and referral for a thorough evaluation by a health care professional with concussion training and expertise
- The importance of watching your child for delayed symptoms, which is especially common among younger athletes
- The need to regularly and close monitor your child during the first 24-48 hours after diagnosed concussion for signs of deteriorating mental condition suggesting a more serious brain injury which requires immediate hospitalization
- The benefit of mental and physical rest in the first few days after concussion, including staying home from school
- The importance of a gradual return to school ("return to learn") and the possible need for adjustments in your child's school schedule (including tests, homework etc.) if concussion symptoms such as difficulty remembering and concentrating persist
- The absolute requirement that no return to *non-contact* practice should be permitted until all concussion symptoms are gone, and the results of neurocognitive tests (if any) have returned to pre-injury levels, and a medical doctor with concussion expertise has provided written authorization
- The absolute requirement that no return to *contact* and game action should be permitted unless and until your child has completed a gradually increased program of exercise without symptoms returning, and a medical doctor with concussion expertise has provided written authorization



- The dangers of continuing to play with concussion symptoms and/or returning to play too soon, before your child's still-developing brain has fully healed, including increased risk of negative short- and long-term, and even catastrophic, consequences to their health, which can include:
  - Increased risk of a longer than normal recovery
  - increased likelihood of suffering a second concussion
  - Increased chance that symptoms may linger for weeks or months
  - permanent cognitive difficulties (problems with memory and concentration), and emotional problems up to possibly increased risk of developing a devastating degenerative neurological disease, such as chronic traumatic encephalopathy.
  
- The need for more cautious and conservative treatment of concussions in children and teens as compared to college-age athletes and adults (minimum 2-3 weeks out of sports after no longer experiencing concussion symptoms)

For more information about the Smart-Teams Play Safe™  
#TeamUp4ConcussionSafety Program, visit [www.Concussions.Smart-Teams.org](http://www.Concussions.Smart-Teams.org)