



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Rhode Island High Schools are about to begin utilizing an innovative program for our student-athletes. The program is called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). This is a computerized exam that the athlete takes prior to the season (baseline test). If the athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury they re-take the exam to help determine

1. The extent of the injury
2. The location of the injury
3. When the injury has healed

The system is used throughout professional sports, has been mandated in the NFL and at the college level (NCAA), and is fast becoming the "Gold Standard" in recognizing and better managing concussion type injuries.

The exam takes about 15-20 minutes and is non-invasive. The program is basically set-up as a "video-game" type format. What it is doing is giving the brain a preseason physical of its cognitive abilities. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration. It is simple and actually most that take it enjoy the challenge of the test.

If your child sustains a head injury, consult the other page of this sheet for signs and symptoms of a concussion. If you believe your child may have had a concussion, please bring this to the attention of the coach, athletic trainer or your doctor. There are several specialized concussion follow-up clinics in the Providence area including:

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| 1. Center for Sports Medicine
600 Warren Ave.
E. Providence RI
519-1608 (open Sept 3) | 4. Cognitive Fitness Center
Frank Sparadeo, PhD
63 Cedar Ave.
East Greenwich , RI
398-7681 |
| 2. Foundry Sports Medicine
285 Promenade St.
Providence, RI
459-4001 | 5. South County Orthopedics
1 High St.
Wakefield, RI
789-1422 |
| 3. Memorial Hospital Concussion Clinic
111 Brewster St
Pawtucket, RI
729-6200 | 6. South Shore Hospital
Janet Kent, MD
Weymouth, MA
(781) 624-8162 |

At one of these clinics the student will re-take the test as well as a complete history and physical to help make a decision as to when the student can return-to-play and/or return to schoolwork.

This gives us the best available information in preventing brain damage that can occur with multiple concussions. Your school's administration and athletic staffs are trying to keep your child's health and safety at the forefront of the high school athletic experience. Please contact your coach or athletic director if you have any questions.

HEADS x UP

CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

What are the signs and symptoms?

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after the injury. If your teen reports **one or more** symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your teen out of play and seek medical attention right away.

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears dazed or stunned • Is confused about assignment or position • Forgets an instruction • Is unsure of game, score, or opponent • Moves clumsily • Answers questions slowly • Loses consciousness (<i>even briefly</i>) • Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes • Can’t recall events <i>prior</i> to hit or fall • Can’t recall events <i>after</i> hit or fall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache or “pressure” in head • Nausea or vomiting • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or blurry vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion • Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

How can you help your teen prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your teens can take to protect themselves from concussion and other injuries.

- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. It should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

- Ensure that they follow their coaches’ rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

What should you do if you think your teen has a concussion?

- 1. Keep your teen out of play.** If your teen has a concussion, her/his brain needs time to heal. Don’t let your teen return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says your teen is symptom-free and it’s OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.
- 2. Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your teen to return to sports.
- 3. Teach your teen that it’s not smart to play with a concussion.** Rest is key after a concussion. Sometimes athletes wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don’t let your teen convince you that s/he’s “just fine.”
- 4. Tell all of your teen’s coaches and the student’s school nurse about ANY concussion.** Coaches, school nurses, and other school staff should know if your teen has ever had a concussion. Your teen may need to limit activities while s/he is recovering from a concussion. Things such as studying, driving, working on a computer, playing video games, or exercising may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Talk to your health care professional, as well as your teen’s coaches, school nurse, and teachers. If needed, they can help adjust your teen’s school activities during her/his recovery.

If you think your teen has a concussion:

Don’t assess it yourself. Take him/her out of play. Seek the advice of a health care professional.

It’s better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information and to order additional materials **free-of-charge**, visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion.