

Catholic Secondary Girls Sport South Australia

Provided by SA Catholic Secondary School Girls Sports Association



Concussion Guidelines

1. BACKGROUND

The South Australian Catholic Secondary School Girls Sport Association (SACSSGSA) adopts the *Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport* (Concussion Guidelines) issued by the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS).

The AIS Concussion Guidelines are available via the following link ais.gov.au.

The AIS Concussion Guidelines are a collaboration between the Australian Institute of Sport, Australasian College of Sport & Exercise Physicians, Sports Medicine Australia and Australian Physiotherapy Association.

These SACSSGSA guidelines are of a general nature only. Individual treatment will depend on the facts and circumstances specific to each individual case. These guidelines are not intended as a standard of care and should not be interpreted as such.

These SACSSGSA guidelines will be reviewed regularly by SACSSGSA and will be modified according to new or revised standards on concussion.

It is recommended that participating schools in SACSSGSA sports and competitions develop and maintain a concussion policy/concussion statement, cognisant of the AIS Concussion Guidelines adopted by SACSSGSA.

2. WHAT IS CONCUSSION?

Concussion is a traumatic brain injury, induced by biomechanical forces to the head, or anywhere on the body which transmits an impulsive force to the head¹.

3. RECOGNISING CONCUSSION

The signs and symptoms are variable, non-specific and may be subtle. Concussion should be suspected when an injury results in a knock to the head or body, that transmits a force to the head.

¹ Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 5th International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Berlin, October 2016 (McCroly et al)

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Visual indicators of concussion include:

- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Lying motionless on the ground/slow to get up
- A dazed, blank or vacant expression
- Appearing unsteady on feet, balance problems or falling over
- Grabbing or clutching of the head
- Impact seizure or convulsion.

The AIS Concussion Guidelines list 20 symptoms when identifying a concussion, and include:

- Headache
- Balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision².

4. WHAT TO DO

A player with a suspected concussion should be immediately removed from play.

SACSSGSA requires that its participating schools have a suitably trained first aid representative, that can assist with any concussion/suspected concussion.

Appendix 1 provides a flow chart of the steps to be taken in the event of a concussion/suspected concussion.

In accordance with the AIS Concussion Guidelines, players should not:

- Be left alone initially (at least for 3 hours)
- Worsening symptoms should lead to immediate medical attention
- Be sent home by themselves – they need to be with a responsible adult
- Drink alcohol, use drugs not prescribed by their health care practitioner
- Drive a motor vehicle until cleared to do so by a health care practitioner.

² Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport, February 2024 (Australian Institute of Sport).

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5. MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

A player with concussion or suspected concussion will need to seek medical attention with a health care professional. It is important to note that the AIS Concussion Guidelines identify a number of 'Red Flags' that, if apparent, recommends immediate referral to an emergency department – refer Appendix 1.

6. RETURN TO SPORT

The AIS Concussion Guidelines include a graded return to sport framework, that specifies for those under 19 years of age and those without a dedicated health care professional to guide recovery. The graded return to sport framework requirements are as follows:

- 6.1 Introduction of light exercise after an initial **24-48 hours** of relative rest.
- 6.2 At least **14 days** symptom free (at rest) before return to contact/collision training.
- 6.3 A player **cannot** go directly from non-contact activities to competition. They **must** complete some full contact training, to the satisfaction of the health care professional, before returning to competitive contact.
- 6.4 A minimum of **21 days** until the resumption of competitive contact/collision sport.

Appendix 2 details the steps for a graded return to sport, which includes the requirement for a clearance from a health care professional.

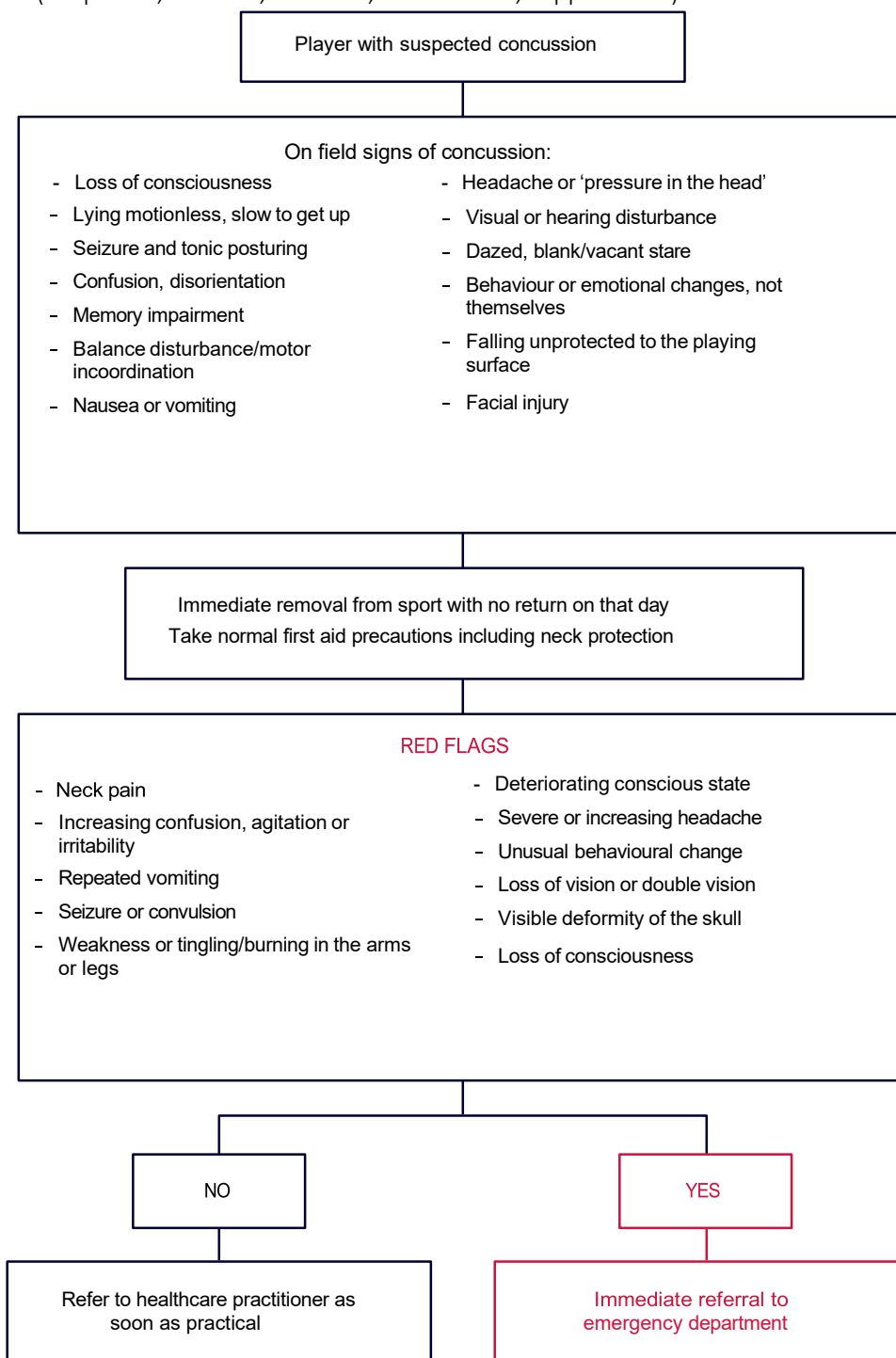
Appendix 3 provides several scenario examples with respect to the time periods for return, depending on the length of time a player is symptomatic.

7. RECORDING OF CONCUSSION INCIDENTS

As with all reportable incidents at SACSSGSA competitions, concussions require the relevant school representative to complete the SACSSGSA Incident Report – refer Appendix 4. The SACSSGSA Incident Report is to be provided to the SACSSGSA Executive Officer, via email at sacssgsa@cesa.catholic.edu.au.



Figure 1: Non-health care practitioner at sporting event where there is a suspicion of concussion
(for parent, coaches, teachers, team-mates, support staff)



³ Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport, February 2024 (Australian Institute of Sport).



Figure 2: Graded return to sport framework for school sport



⁴ Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport, February 2024 (Australian Institute of Sport).



Return to Sport Timeframes

- > Day of concussive incident is considered 'Day 0'.
- > Examples below assume a sport where competition (competitive contact) occurs weekly on a Saturday.
- > The 14-day symptom-free period does not start until the first day that the athlete is symptom-free.

Key:

Incident
Symptomatic
Symptom-free
Contact training
Full competition

Example 1. Player symptom-free on day 3 (yellow); **and**
 Completes their 14-day symptom-free period (yellow); **and**
 Completes 4-days of contact training without difficulty (blue) (refer section 6.3); **and**
 Has clearance from a health care professional (blue); **can**
 Resume playing on the Saturday of week four (green).

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Saturday	5. Saturday	12. Saturday	Saturday	Saturday
Sunday	6. Sunday	13. Sunday	Sunday	Sunday
Monday	7. Monday	14. Monday	Monday	Monday
1. Tuesday	8. Tuesday	Tuesday	Tuesday	Tuesday
2. Wednesday	9. Wednesday	Wednesday	Wednesday	Wednesday
3. Thursday	10. Thursday	Thursday	Thursday	Thursday
4. Friday	11. Friday	Friday	Friday	Friday

⁵ Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport, February 2024 (Australian Institute of Sport).

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Appendix 3

- Example 2. Player symptom-free on day 7 (yellow); **and**
 Completes their 14-day symptom-free period (yellow); **and**
 Completes 7-days of contact training without difficulty (blue) (refer section 6.3); **and**
 Has clearance from a health care professional (blue); **can**
 Resume playing on the Saturday of week five (green).

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Saturday	1. Saturday	8. Saturday	Saturday	Saturday
Sunday	2. Sunday	9. Sunday	Sunday	Sunday
Monday	3. Monday	10. Monday	Monday	Monday
Tuesday	4. Tuesday	11. Tuesday	Tuesday	Tuesday
Wednesday	5. Wednesday	12. Wednesday	Wednesday	Wednesday
Thursday	6. Thursday	13. Thursday	Thursday	Thursday
Friday	7. Friday	14. Friday	Friday	Friday

- Example 3. Player symptom-free on day 9 (yellow); **and**
 Completes their 14-day symptom-free period (yellow); **and**
 Completes 5-days of contact training without difficulty (blue) refer section 6.3); **and**
 Has clearance from a health care professional (blue); **can**
 Resume playing on the Saturday of week five (green).

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Saturday	Saturday	6. Saturday	13. Saturday	Saturday
Sunday	Sunday	7. Sunday	14. Sunday	Sunday
Monday	1. Monday	8. Monday	Monday	Monday
Tuesday	2. Tuesday	9. Tuesday	Tuesday	Tuesday
Wednesday	3. Wednesday	10. Wednesday	Wednesday	Wednesday
Thursday	4. Thursday	11. Thursday	Thursday	Thursday
Friday	5. Friday	12. Friday	Friday	Friday

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Appendix 4

SACSSGSA Incident Report

Name:	Role:
Signature:	Date:

Incident-

Date and time of incident:
Name/s of person/s involved in the incident and their School/s & Team/s:
Description of incident:
Witnesses (include contact details):

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Reporting of the incident to School/Association-

Incident Reported to:	Date:
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Follow Up Action-

Description of actions to be taken:

Please forward a copy of this form to your School Sport Coordinator or Administrator as well as the SACSSGSA Executive Officer as soon as possible so further follow up can be done if required.

Email: sacssgsa@cesa.catholic.edu.au

Thank You.