

Understanding Concussions:

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



What is a concussion?

A concussion disrupts normal brain function and is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head—or even a body impact that makes the brain shift quickly. Even mild bumps can be serious, especially for young, developing brains, and should be properly addressed.

What to do for a concussion?

Seek medical attention promptly for a proper assessment. A concussion specialist can help determine when it's safe for your child to resume activities like school and sports. Ensure they get ample rest, avoiding physical or mental strain, as activities like exercise, studying, and screen time can worsen symptoms during recovery.

Returning to School

Inform teachers, the school nurse, coaches, and counselors about your child's concussion. They may need rest breaks, shorter hours, extra time for assignments, and reduced reading or screen time to support their recovery at school.

Treatment

Concussion symptoms aren't always visible and may appear hours or days after the injury. Watch for changes in behavior, worsening symptoms, or if your child feels "off." Seek medical attention if any symptoms arise.

Signs observed by parents/guardians

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Confusion about events
- Answers questions slowly or repeats questions
- Memory loss before or after the injury
- Brief loss of consciousness
- Behavior or personality changes
- Forgets class schedule or assignments

Symptoms reported by your child/teen

- Thinking: Difficulty with clarity, concentration, or memory.
- Physical: Headache, dizziness, fatigue, sensitivity to light/noise.
- Emotional: Irritability, sadness, nervousness.
- Sleep: Changes in sleep patterns or drowsiness.

Urgent Symptoms Head to the ER

- Uneven pupils, worsening headache, or drowsiness
- Weakness, numbness, or lack of coordination
- Repeated vomiting, slurred speech, or seizures
- Trouble recognizing people, increased confusion, or unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness, even briefly