



HOCKEY AUSTRALIA

CONCUSSION TOOLKIT

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Hockey Australia Concussion Policy has been designed to be a practical resource to ensure that:

- a. All concussions and suspected concussions in participants at all levels of hockey are appropriately identified and managed; and
- b. All who suffer a concussion receive timely and appropriate care and guidance to return them to everyday activities and sport safely

The Concussion Policy can be found online [here](#).

This toolkit includes a suite of resources to help Associations and Clubs generate concussion awareness and practically implement the Policy.

Set out below is a summary of each of the resources included in this toolkit.

1. Hockey Concussion Policy Endorsement & Adoption Process

This graphic sets out the steps each Association and Club should consider for:

- a. Endorsing the Concussion Policy; and
- b. Ensuring its adoption and awareness across its stakeholders.

2. Concussion Report Form

Report form that must be completed for all concussion related incidents. This form should be submitted to concussion@hockey.org.au and to any other Association that requires a copy of the form.

3. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

A set of answers to concussion-related questions that may commonly arise for key hockey stakeholders. These FAQs cover the following groups:

- a. Players, parents and entourages;
- b. Coaches, officials and volunteers; and
- c. Umpires.

4. Concussion Policy Communication & Messaging

A list of key messages, suggested notes, and social posts to help Associations and Clubs introduce and promote the new Concussion Policy.

5. Concussion Awareness Poster

Concussion awareness poster that can be displayed online and in club facilities.

6. Concussion Management Workflow

Outlines a simple pathway that should be followed to respond to and manage a suspected concussion. It provides prompts for clubs representatives and umpires, on-field signs and symptoms of concussions and red flags. This can be laminated and posted in dugouts, on sidelines and in clubrooms to assist in the immediate management of concussion incidents.

7. Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool

A globally acknowledged tool that non-medically trained individuals may use to help identify signs or symptoms of a suspected concussion. It is not intended to be used as a standalone offering and should not substitute for appropriate medical assessment, treatment and advice. Always remember that Australian hockey – like many other sports – manages concussion conservatively: “if in doubt, sit them out”.

8. Webinar Events

Hockey Australia plans to host a series of webinars for Associations and Clubs that will help increase awareness and knowledge around managing concussion and supporting the Policy’s implementation.

ENDORSEMENT & ADOPTION PROCESS



Step 1: Endorse & Adopt

Start by endorsing and adopting the Policy at Association and club-level.



Step 2: Spread the word

Make the policy available on all platforms so that members can easily access it.

Include relevant resources such as the concussion toolkit.



Step 3: Follow the leader

Appoint an individual or group within your Association or Club who will champion the policy.



Step 4: Upskill everyone

Ensure hockey participants read and adhere to the policy by providing any necessary education and training opportunities.

This will help everyone feel equipped and empowered to enforce and follow it.



Step 5: Update processes

Include a policy acknowledgement and resources in registration processes and systems demonstrating that your association or club has a commitment to the policy.

For access to all hockey policies and related integrity resources head to:

www.hockey.org.au/integrity

For further assistance, please reach out to your association or club representative.

CONCUSSION REPORT FORM

Please fill out the below form and email to concussion@hockey.org.au as well as your **relevant state hockey association**.

DETAILS OF INJURED PERSON/INCIDENT

Name:

Club/Team:

Age: ☐ Adult ☐ Under 18

Date of incident:

Location/Venue of incident:

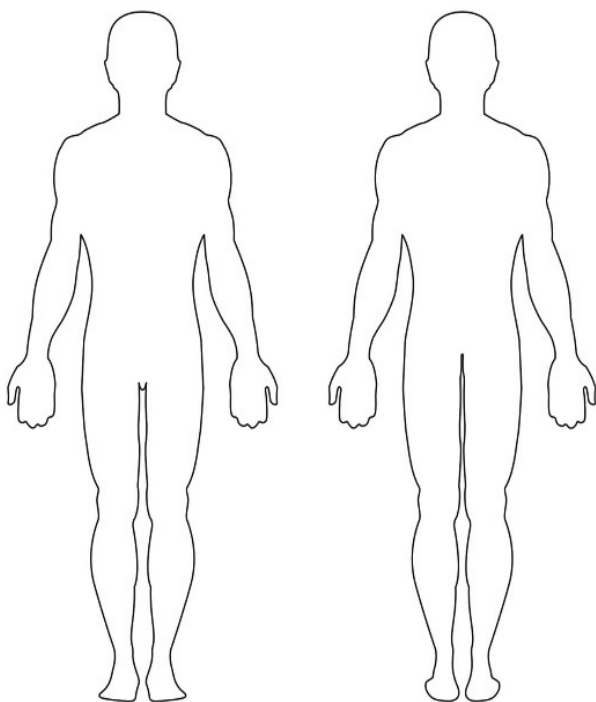
Activity at time of incident:

- ☐ Match
☐ Training

Cause of incident:

- ☐ Ball
☐ Stick
☐ Body/collision

Location of injury (please mark on body map):



Details of injury/incident:

Action taken:

- ☐ None
☐ Removed from field
☐ Refused to leave field
☐ Assessed by onsite medical

Referral:

- ☐ None
☐ Medical practitioner
☐ Emergency room/department
☐ Ambulance

DETAILS OF PERSON COMPLETING THE FORM

Name:

Club/team:

Position/role:

Date (form completed):

MEMBER ASSOCIATION/HOCKEY AUSTRALIA USE

Date recorded:

Medical clearance required: ☐ NO ☐ YES

Clearance advice/form received: ☐ N/A ☐ NO ☐ YES

CONCUSSION FAQs

FOR PLAYERS, PARENTS & ENTOURAGES

Q WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

A DON'T HIDE IT – Tell your Coach, Medical Staff, Club Representative, Medical Practitioner or Parent/Guardian/Carer

REPORT IT – Don't return to play, training or other related activity with symptoms of a concussion. The sooner you report it, the sooner you may return to activity

TAKE TIME TO RECOVER – If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. The amount of time will vary from person to person. While healing, you may be more likely to sustain a second concussion. Repeat concussions can result in long-term issues.

Q WHY ARE SOME PLAYERS RELUCTANT TO SELF-REPORT CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS?

A Some players may not report a concussion because they don't think it's serious. They may also worry about:

- What their coach or teammates might think of them
- Letting their teammates or the team down
- Losing their position on the team or during the match
- Looking weak

We want to create a culture and environments where:

- Our players feel comfortable reporting concussion symptoms
- Our players receive positive messaging for reporting concussion symptoms
- Clubs and teams talk about concussion and model and expect safe play
- Players are referred to appropriate care for treatment.

Q WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I/MY CHILD HAS A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION?

A SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE. A medical practitioner can assess you/your child to determine if they have a concussion, how serious it is, a treatment plan and when it is safe to return to sports.

IF APPROPRIATE, KEEP THEM OUT OF PLAY. Concussions can take time to heal. So don't let your child return to play until a medical practitioner says it's OK to do so.

INFORM YOUR/YOUR CHILD'S COACH/CLUB. They can assist with a graduated return to play and be aware of their situation.

Q MY / MY CHILD'S CLUB HAS REFERRED US TO A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER FOR A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION. WILL I BE OUT OF POCKET FOR TREATMENT?

A Hockey Australia provides personal injury insurance cover as part of player registration fees. Unfortunately the sport of hockey in Australia is unable to provide medical insurance to cover gap payments for visits to medical practitioners. Players are encouraged to seek medical advice for any suspected concussion. The Concussion Policy also provides for mandatory exclusions from participating in hockey activities should a player not consult with, or receive medical clearance from, a medical practitioner in certain circumstances.

CONCUSSION FAQs

FOR PLAYERS, PARENTS & ENTOURAGES

Q CAN I HAVE A CONCUSSION IF I NEVER HIT THE GROUND OR LOST CONSCIOUSNESS?

A Did you know that most concussions don't involve loss of consciousness? You can sustain a concussion even if you don't hit your head. An impact or blow elsewhere on your body can transmit a force to the brain and cause a concussion (e.g. whiplash).

If in doubt, sit them out!

Q I FEEL FINE. WHAT'S THE POINT OF SEEING A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER?

A Medical practitioners are trained to manage concussions. If you have a concussion, they will provide an appropriate treatment plan.

They can also rule out a concussion, allowing adult players to return to training and playing activity sooner than if you had a concussion.

The Concussion Policy also provides for mandatory exclusions from participating in hockey activities should a player not consult with, or receive medical clearance from, a medical practitioner in certain circumstances.

CONCUSSION FAQs

FOR COACHES, OFFICIALS & VOLUNTEERS

Q WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO?

A All relevant stakeholders involved in hockey including, players, parents and entourages, coaches, support staff, officials, volunteers and umpires, should know about and meet the requirements of this Policy.

Q WHY SHOULD A PLAYER WITH A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION BE REMOVED FROM PLAY?

A The brain needs time to heal following a concussion. A player who continues to play with a concussion has a greater chance of getting another concussion.

Q HOW DO I RECOGNISE A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?

A A player who shows or reports one or more of the following signs and symptoms or simply says they 'just don't feel OK/right' following an impact to the head, face, neck, or body may have a concussion:

- Unsteady on feet, balance problems
- Headache
- Feeling 'dinged' or 'dazed'
- Nausea or feel like vomiting
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Behavioural changes (sadness, irritability, emotional)

If any of these signs or symptoms are observed or reported, the player must be removed from activity and not return until assessed by a medical practitioner.

Q WHAT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY PRESENT THAT INDICATE SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS THAN A CONCUSSION?

A Any of the following signs or symptoms present following an impact to the head, face, neck, or body may indicate a more severe head or spinal injury:

- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Seizure or convulsion
- Neck pain
- Weakness or tingling in the arms or legs
- Increasing confusion, impaired memory or irritability
- Repeated vomiting
- Severe or increasing headache

Call an ambulance immediately to take the player to the nearest emergency room/department

Q MY PLAYER SAYS THEY ARE FEELING BETTER AFTER SHOWING SIGNS/SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION. CAN THEY RETURN TO PLAY/ACTIVITY?

A No one other than a medical practitioner can decide that it is OK for someone with a suspected concussion to resume participation on the same day. This includes the player themselves, parents of a child or young person, coaches or officials.

CONCUSSION FAQs

FOR UMPIRES

Q AM I BEING ASKED TO ASSESS PLAYERS FOR CONCUSSION?

A No. If you observe any visible signs of concussion following an impact to the head, face, neck, or body, or if a nominated representative, coach, team manager or captain raises a concern, stop play.

It is the Club's responsibility to ensure the player is removed from the field before recommencing the match.

Q WHAT HAPPENS IF A PLAYER REFUSES TO LEAVE THE FIELD?

A It is the Club's responsibility to ensure the player is removed from the field before recommencing the match. Match officials must notify the Member Association and Hockey Australia as soon as practicable after the conclusion of the match using the template reporting form if there was delay in removing the player from the field.

Q WON'T THIS CREATE ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND BURDENS FOR UMPIRES?

A As part of the Policy development phase, we engaged with various stakeholders representative of the broader hockey community to ensure we met our health and welfare objectives while minimising any additional impacts and requirements on our coaches, officials, volunteers, and umpires.

We have a number of touchpoints throughout the implementation phase to measure and monitor the effectiveness of the Policy. If you have any concerns or questions, please speak with your Association or Club, or reach out to Hockey Australia at concussion@hockey.org.au

CONCUSSION

Concussion

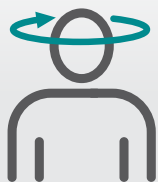
**“It’s ok to say you’re not ok
... if in doubt... sit them out”**

If any of these signs or symptoms are observed or reported following an impact to the head, face, neck or body, remove the player from the activity immediately if safe to do so.

They should not return to activity until assessed by a medical practitioner.



**Headache
or neck pain**



**Balance
problems**



**Vomiting
or nausea**



**Sensitivity
to sound**



**Light
sensitivity**



**Behavioural
changes**



Need to report a concussion?
Scan the QR code here

CONCUSSION POLICY

COMMUNICATION & MESSAGING

Key Messaging

-
- ☒ The Concussion Policy's guiding principles safeguard our players and promote a safe and successful return to activity while minimising any short-term risk and long-term health consequences.
-
- ☒ The most important steps in the early management of concussion include:
 - Recognising a suspected concussion
 - Removing the player from the match or training if safe to do so
 - Referring the player to a medical practitioner for assessment.
-
- ☒ Any player suspected of having a concussion should be removed from play, training or other related activity. This is the responsibility of the team/club of the player and not the match official.
-
- ☒ If in doubt, sit them out. Brains are worth the wait.
-
- ☒ Remember, it's better to be safe. Consult your doctor or a medical practitioner after a suspected concussion.
-
- ☒ Only qualified and trained medical practitioners should undertake concussion diagnosis and treatment.
-
- ☒ Concussions affect people differently. While most players with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some can have symptoms that last for days or even weeks.
-
- ☒ A more serious concussion can last for much longer. It's better to miss one game than an extended period.
-
- ☒ A more conservative approach is taken with children and young people (under 18 years) as their brains are still developing and typically take longer to recover following a concussion.
-

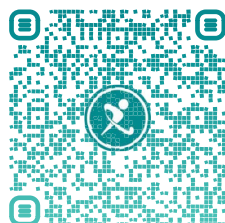
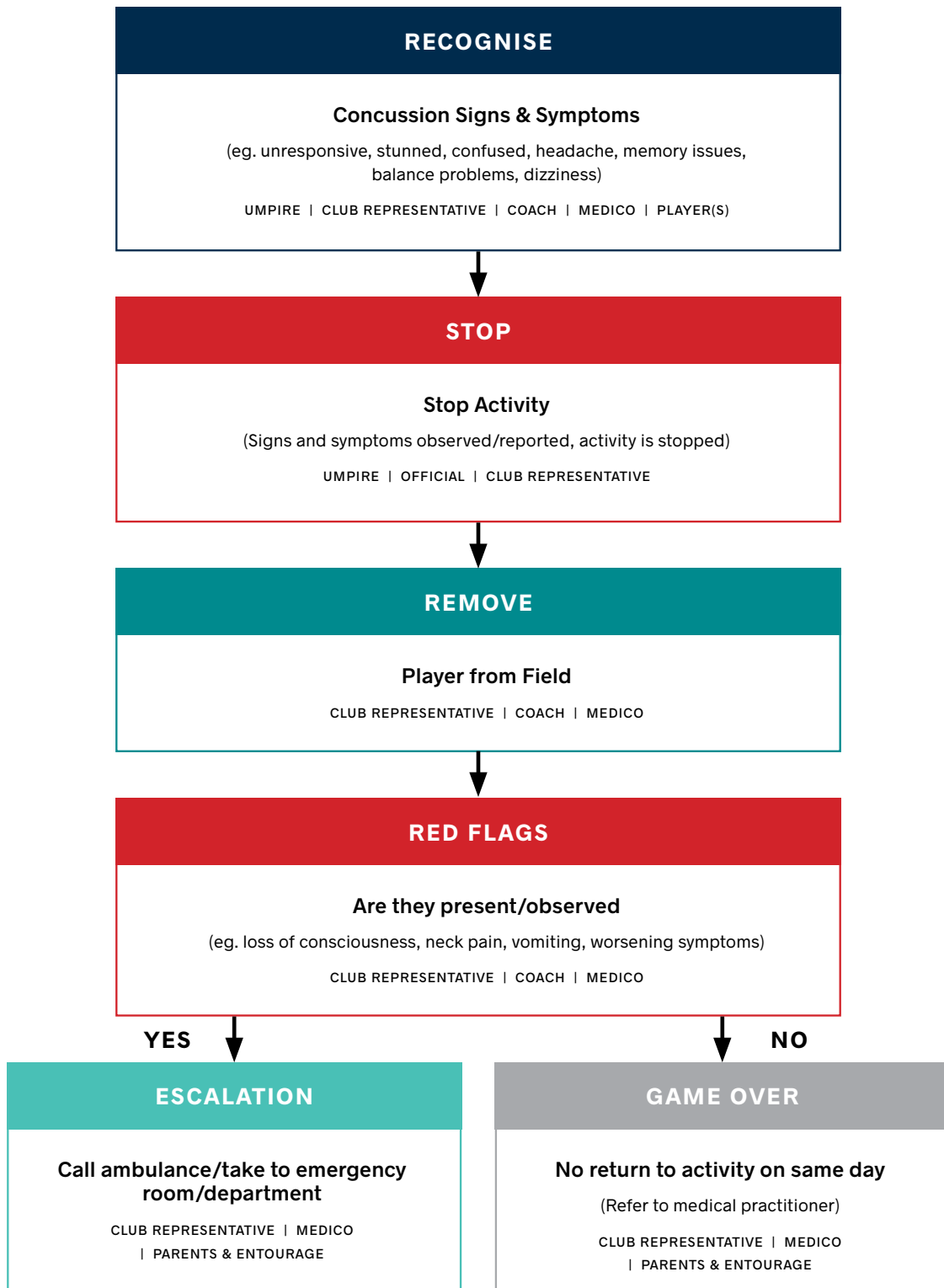
CONCUSSION POLICY

COMMUNICATION & MESSAGING

Suggested copy for newsletters, social media platforms & other communication touchpoints

- » Hockey Australia has released its new Concussion Policy.
Read how we are committed to protecting the health and welfare of our participants [here](#).
- » [@HockeyAustralia](#) has released its new Concussion Policy.
Read how we are committed to protecting the health and welfare of our participants [here](#).
- » Do you know how to recognise the signs or symptoms of a possible concussion?
Learn how by reading Hockey Australia's new Concussion Policy.
- » Do you know what to do if you suspect a possible concussion in a hockey player?
Learn the steps for the early management of concussion [here](#).
- » Looking for resources to help implement and promote the new Concussion Policy?
Find [@HockeyAustralia's](#) Concussion Toolkit [here](#).

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT WORKFLOW



Need to report a concussion?
Scan the QR code here

Pocket CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL™

To help identify concussion in children, youth and adults



FIFA®



RECOGNIZE & REMOVE

Concussion should be suspected **if one or more** of the following visible clues, signs, symptoms or errors in memory questions are present.

1. Visible clues of suspected concussion

Any one or more of the following visual clues can indicate a possible concussion:

Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
Lying motionless on ground/Slow to get up
Unsteady on feet / Balance problems or falling over/Incoordination
Grabbing/Clutching of head
Dazed, blank or vacant look
Confused/Not aware of plays or events

2. Signs and symptoms of suspected concussion

Presence of any one or more of the following signs & symptoms may suggest a concussion:

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsion
- Balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Drowsiness
- More emotional
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Fatigue or low energy
- Nervous or anxious
- "Don't feel right"
- Difficulty remembering
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Feeling slowed down
- "Pressure in head"
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Amnesia
- Feeling like "in a fog"
- Neck Pain
- Sensitivity to noise
- Difficulty concentrating

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3. Memory function

Failure to answer any of these questions correctly may suggest a concussion.

- "What venue are we at today?"
- "Which half is it now?"
- "Who scored last in this game?"
- "What team did you play last week /game?"
- "Did your team win the last game?"

Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM PLAY, and should not be returned to activity until they are assessed medically. Athletes with a suspected concussion should not be left alone and should not drive a motor vehicle.

It is recommended that, in all cases of suspected concussion, the player is referred to a medical professional for diagnosis and guidance as well as return to play decisions, even if the symptoms resolve.

RED FLAGS

If ANY of the following are reported then the player should be safely and immediately removed from the field. If no qualified medical professional is available, consider transporting by ambulance for urgent medical assessment:

- Athlete complains of neck pain
- Increasing confusion or irritability
- Repeated vomiting
- Seizure or convulsion
- Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Severe or increasing headache
- Unusual behaviour change
- Double vision

Remember:

- In all cases, the basic principles of first aid (danger, response, airway, breathing, circulation) should be followed.
- Do not attempt to move the player (other than required for airway support) unless trained to do so
- Do not remove helmet (if present) unless trained to do so.

from McCrory et. al, Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport. Br J Sports Med 47 (5), 2013

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