

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

Before Beginning any Extracurricular Athletic Activity

Massachusetts state law currently requires that parents and legal guardians of students participating in the Athletic Program, Athletic Trainers, Coaches, Athletic Directors, parents volunteering at athletic events, nurses, Marching Band Directors, and marching band members take a free on-line course annually to familiarize themselves with the signs and symptoms of a concussion. There are two courses available that contain all information required by the law. These courses will also discuss proper response to a suspected concussion, return to play protocols, and suggestions for prevention of sports related head injuries. Northbridge Public Schools highly encourages student-athletes to take this course, as well. If a parent or student athlete does not have access to these online courses, they may be given printed materials with information about concussions to read.

Concussion in Sports : What you need to know is from the National Federation of State High School Associations and can be accessed at:

<http://www.nfhslearn.com/elective>

Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can be accessed at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion/HeadsUp/training/HeadsUpConcussion.html>

Parents/Guardians/Athletes

- Provide the school nurse with a physical examination within 13 months of the start of the current sports season.
- Student and parent/guardian will sign the Athletic/Co-curricular Activities Assessment Form indicating any past history of concussion and fill out the Concussion History form.
- All athletes will take the IMPACT test prior to participating in any sport.

If A Head Injury Occurs

- Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.
- The student shall not return to play unless and until the student provides medical clearance and authorization by a physician or nurse practitioner.
- The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the game or practice in which a student has been removed from play for a head injury or suspected concussion. The coach also must provide this information to the parent in writing by the end of the next business day.

Parents/Guardians/Athletes

- Communicate with the school nurse regarding student symptoms and medical follow-up

- Provide the school nurse with medical assessments and recommendations in writing, including a written clearance to return to play from the student's health care provider. School staff maintains the right to remove a student from play if, after being cleared, the student exhibits recurring signs of a concussion. Parents will be notified.
- The student and parent will report symptoms to the nurse and work with her to develop an ongoing, gradual re-entry plan for school.

“Away” Contest Protocol

It is important to note that students, coaches, and parents are held to this same protocol when they compete on the road at “away” athletic events.

Please note that concussion information sheets may be downloaded by visiting

www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/highschool.html.