

# CONCUSSION GUIDELINES

## The 10 facts you need to know about concussion:

1. Concussion occurs following head injury. It usually follows a heavy tackle or collision.
2. You do not need to be knocked out to be concussed. Some players will just be vague and not aware of what is going on around them. In rare cases, a convulsion (seizure) may occur.
3. All players should be checked by a doctor on the same day as their concussion occurs.
4. Convulsions, localised weakness, unequal pupils, becoming more sleepy and vomiting may be signs of serious head injury and the player should be taken immediately to the doctor.
5. Following the injury, the player may often be irritable, unco-operative, tired and nauseated (feel like vomiting or headache). These are common findings and may last for several days.
6. Over the next week or two, the player may have post concussion symptoms. These include headache, reduced concentration span, slowed decision-making, irritability, fatigue, emotional or personality change.
7. The player should not normally return to training or competition for **at least three weeks**. If any post-concussion symptoms are still present three weeks after injury, the player should wait for all symptoms to go away. **All** players should get a medical clearance before returning to training. Players who have had pre-season testing may be able to return to play before three weeks provided they have **no** symptoms, a return to their baseline tests and a clearance from a sports physician or neurologist.
8. Concussed players should not drink alcohol until post concussion symptoms have gone.
9. An unconscious player may also have a serious spinal injury. Always assume this until proven otherwise.
10. Wearing a custom-made mouthguard may help to prevent head injury.