



**KANSAS STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION SPORTS PLAYING RULES RELATED TO CONCUSSIONS**

The following language will appear in all National Federation sports rulebooks for the 2010-2011 school year:

**“Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.”**

The National Federation has provided the following explanation regarding the intent of the rule:

“The rules language above, which will appear in all NFHS Rules Books for the 2010-11 school year, reflects a strengthening of rules regarding the safety of athletes suspected of having a concussion, but not a revision in primary responsibilities in these areas. Previous rules required officials to remove any athlete from play who was “unconscious or apparently unconscious.” This revised language reflects an increasing focus on safety, given that the vast majority of concussions do not involve a loss of consciousness. However, the revised language does not create a duty that officials are expected to perform a medical diagnosis. The change in this rule simply calls for officials to be cognizant of athletes who display signs, symptoms or behaviors of a concussion from the lists below, and remove them from play. At that point, the official’s job is done.”

**The KSHSAA offers the following guidelines and recommendations for implementation of the NFHS playing rule related to concussions:**

1. Unless it can be conclusively determined that the signs, symptoms or behaviors are not the result of a concussion, the rule applies and the student: (1) must be immediately removed from the contest or practice and (2) may not again participate in practice or competition until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. The student may not be cleared for practice or competition the same day that the concussion consistent sign, symptom or behavior was observed.
2. *What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion”?* The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following lists of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

<b>SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS</b>	<b>SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears dazed or stunned</li><li>• Is confused about assignment</li><li>• Forgets plays</li><li>• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily</li><li>• Answers questions slowly</li><li>• Loses consciousness</li><li>• Shows behavior or personality changes</li><li>• Cannot recall events prior to hit</li><li>• Cannot recall events after hit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headache</li><li>• Nausea</li><li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>• Double or fuzzy vision</li><li>• Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li>• Feeling sluggish</li><li>• Feeling foggy or groggy</li><li>• Concentration or memory problems</li><li>• Confusion</li></ul>

**These lists may not be exhaustive**

3. *What is an “appropriate health care professional”?* Under Kansas law, a Medical Doctor (MD) and a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) are licensed to treat a concussion and therefore would be an appropriate health care professional. A Physician’s Assistant (PA) can perform medical procedures which are delegated or established by written protocols with a supervising physician. An Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP) can engage in medical care based upon an agreement for collaborative practice with a physician. Unless the school can determine that a licensed PA or ARNP has been authorized by a physician to issue a return to play clearance, a return to play clearance should only be accepted from a licensed MD or DO.
4. Return to Play Clearance Requirements:
  - A. The clearance must be in writing and signed by the health care professional.
  - B. The clearance may not be issued on the same day the athlete was removed from play.
5. *What should be done after the student is cleared by an appropriate health care professional?* After a clearance has been issued, the student’s actual return to practice and play should follow a graduated protocol. The National Federation has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports:

#### **Medical Clearance RTP Protocol**

1. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
  2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
  3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport such as skating or running, and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
  4. Begin Non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
  5. Full contact in practice setting.
  6. Game play.
- A. ATHLETE MUST REMAIN ASYMTOMATIC TO PROGRESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL.<sup>1</sup>
  - B. IF SYMPTOMS RECUR, ATHLETE MUST RETURN TO PREVIOUS LEVEL AND SHOULD BE REEVALUATED BY AN APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.
  - C. MEDICAL CHECK SHOULD OCCUR BEFORE CONTACT.<sup>2</sup>

**This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care professional who issues the clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.**

6. *Parents and students should be provided information regarding concussions prior to participation.* Following is a Concussion Information Form that can be provided to help educate students and parents. It is designed so that the student and parent will sign and return the document to the school prior to participation.

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<sup>1</sup> It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day

<sup>2</sup> Final written clearance from the appropriate healthcare professional should be obtained before the student-athlete engages in any un-restricted or full contact activity

(INSERT SCHOOLNAME HERE)

### Concussion Information Form

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

**Symptoms may include one or more of the following:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headaches</li><li>• “Pressure in head”</li><li>• Nausea or vomiting</li><li>• Neck pain</li><li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>• Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision</li><li>• Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li>• Feeling sluggish or slowed down</li><li>• Feeling foggy or groggy</li><li>• Drowsiness</li><li>• Change in sleep patterns</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amnesia</li><li>• “Don’t feel right”</li><li>• Fatigue or low energy</li><li>• Sadness</li><li>• Nervousness or anxiety</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• More emotional</li><li>• Confusion</li><li>• Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)</li><li>• Repeating the same question/comment</li></ul> |
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**Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears dazed</li><li>• Vacant facial expression</li><li>• Confused about assignment</li><li>• Forgets plays</li><li>• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily or displays incoordination</li><li>• Answers questions slowly</li><li>• Slurred speech</li><li>• Shows behavior or personality changes</li><li>• Can’t recall events prior to hit</li><li>• Can’t recall events after hit</li><li>• Seizures or convulsions</li><li>• Any change in typical behavior or personality</li><li>• Loses consciousness</li></ul> |
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**What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns to soon?**

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one (second impact syndrome). This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athlete will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

**If you think your child has suffered a concussion**

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion Remember its better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

_____	_____	_____
Student-athlete Name Printed	Student-athlete Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Parent or Legal Guardian Printed	Parent or Legal Guardian Signature	Date