



Webster Youth Sports Council Health & Wellness Initiative

THE MISSING LINK IN CONCUSSION CARE

By Dr. Joe Manza DC, CACCP - Webster's Friendly Neighborhood Chiropractor located in the Village of Webster

When it comes to youth sports, athlete health and safety is a primary concern. Every *Cyclone* season we are given information to read and sign regarding concussion. This is important information for parents since ice-hockey is in the top three sports with the highest incidence of concussion; soccer and football round out the top three. While we are happy for this information, this is the extent of concussion education for parents and guardians. Recognizing more needs to be done the Webster Youth Sports Council has stepped up to provide more health and wellness information to the families of our youth athletes.

We are all aware concussions are a major concern for athletes and non-athletes alike and anytime there is upper body trauma a concussion must be considered. However, there is another overlooked silent partner intimately associated with concussion: whiplash associated disorder (WAD). You may be familiar with whiplash as it is commonly associated with car accidents or riding the Jack Rabbit at Sea Breeze. Best case, WAD is minor neck soreness Worst case,

WAD mimics concussion symptoms and contributes to post-concussion syndrome. While there are major differences, both events have very similar symptoms

including, but not limited to: concentration/memory problems, dizziness, headache, nausea, visual problems, vomiting, and more.

A common factor in the relationship between concussion and WAD lies in physics, specifically gravitation forces (G force); this is the amount of gravitational force placed upon an object. Our body experiences momentary G forces daily; here are a few examples to put those into perspective: 1G by simply sitting, 1.5Gs flying in a passenger airplane, 3Gs when sneezing, 4Gs for a decent roller coaster ride, and 7-9Gs for our heroic military fighter pilots. For our purpose, it is important to know that when a traumatic concussive event occurs there are anywhere between 70Gs to 120Gs (average 95Gs) applied to the head. Whiplash associated disorder occurs at the much lower force of 4.5Gs. Seeing how the momentary G force of a concussive event greatly exceeds that of a WAD event there is no doubt that the cervical spine (neck) is a component of concussion.

Further research shows even more connections between concussion and WAD. In a (eh) Canadian junior hockey study on concussion and WAD, every player had signs and symptoms of both regardless of if the injury was to the head or body. Moreover, the University of Buffalo surveyed chronic concussion and whiplash patients and their results showed there were no differences in symptoms between the two



Started in 1993, the Webster Youth Sports Council is a youth sports advocacy coalition comprised of community sports groups in Webster, NY.

groups. This is critical information to understand when seeking the best outcomes for concussion management.

Many healthcare providers are now urging that the cervical spine be assessed and cared for when there is a traumatic injury to the head or upper body creating concussion. Once the neurological component of concussion has been addressed the cervical spine needs to be next on the list for assessment. While most concussion symptoms resolve between seven to ten days persistent symptoms and post-concussion syndrome are remnants of an incomplete care protocol – the cervical spine was missed. There is much evidence supporting the care for the concussion and cervical spine with specific Chiropractic spinal adjustments and appropriate rehab protocols.



If all aspects of concussion are appropriately addressed and cared for from the beginning our youth athletes will have a speedier recovery with a safer and healthier return to play. There are many other aspects of concussion I will be discussing in future articles such as gut health, second concussion syndrome and more, so keep checking back with the Webster Youth Sports Council for that important information and much more.

Dr. Joe Manza DC, CACCP is a 2004 graduate of New York Chiropractic College and through the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association holds a Certification from the Academy Council of Chiropractic Pediatrics. Dr. Manza is one of the few Doctors of Chiropractic in Rochester, the only one in Webster, that specializes in pregnancy and pediatrics with a focus on youth sports and concussions. He has been in private practice for 17 years, the last four of which he has been located in the village of Webster. Dr. Joe lives in Webster with his wife Kelly and sons Derek and Dean who are very active in the Cyclone hockey organization. **To contact Dr. Manza please call 585.334.7555.**

