



St Pauls Uniting Sporting Club Inc

Concussion Guidelines

BACKGROUND

This document sets out the guiding principles and provides general advice regarding the management of concussion.

These Guidelines have been compiled with reference to the following organisations:

- Connectivity - <https://www.connectivity.org.au>
- Australian Sports Commission in conjunction with the AIS – https://www.concussioninsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1133994/3738_2_Concussion-Guidelines-for-community-and-youth-FA-acc-v2.pdf
- Sports Medicine Australia - <https://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Concussion-Recognition-Tool-CRT6.pdf>

These Guidelines are of a general nature only. Individual treatment will depend on the facts and circumstances specific to each individual case. These Guidelines are not intended as a standard of care and should not be interpreted as such.

These Guidelines will be reviewed regularly by St Pauls Uniting Sporting Club Inc (the Association) and will be modified according to the development of knowledge.

DEFINITION

A concussion is a short-term disturbance to normal brain function due to an external force impacting the head, neck, or body. The forces that occur during a concussion-causing event cause the brain to move within the skull, which in turn can cause the nerve cells and blood vessels in the brain to stretch and rebound. In some cases, concussion may also result in changes or damage to the ocular (eye) and vestibular (balance) systems.

RECOVERY

Most individuals recover fully from a concussion within a few days to weeks after their injury. However, for some individuals, the recovery process may be longer.

It's important to note that individual recovery times are different for each person and the degree and speed of return to normal activities should be managed by a clinician to ensure symptoms are not made worse.

SIGNS OF CONCUSSION

Concussion can result in a range of **signs** (things you can see) and **symptoms** (things people say they are experiencing). No two concussions are alike. It is possible for people to experience different concussion signs and symptoms after their injury, even if they have had a concussion before.

Concussion signs and symptoms may appear at the time of injury or can develop and/or get worse over the following hours or days. **Just one sign or symptom is enough to indicate that a concussion may have occurred.**

Because there are many different signs and symptoms that can be experienced after a concussion, it can be helpful to group them into the following categories: *physical (somatic)*, *cognitive*, *emotional*, and *sleep*. A person may experience concussion signs and/or symptoms from any or just one category.

Physical

- Headache/Migraine
- Dizziness
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Balance problems
- Changes in vision (eg blurry or double vision)
- Sensitivity to light or noise

Cognitive

- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty paying attention
- Poor memory
- Feeling 'not right'

Emotional

- Anxiety
- Feeling sad
- More emotional

- Irritability

Sleep

- Sleeping more than usual
- Sleeping less than usual
- Trouble falling or staying asleep
- Fatigue

The Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT6) from Sports Medicine Australia can be a useful tool.

REMOVE FROM PLAY

Any player with a suspected concussion should be **immediately removed from play**, and should not be returned to activity until they are assessed by a qualified medical practitioner.

Players with a suspected concussion should not be left alone and should not drive a motor vehicle.

Only qualified medical practitioners should diagnose whether a concussion has occurred or provide advice as to whether the player can return to play.

There should be **no return to play** on the day of a concussive injury for anyone.

MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

A qualified medical practitioner should be consulted as soon as practicable after the concussive injury event. Advice regarding treatment and a plan for return to normal activities and sport should be obtained and complied with. A copy of this plan should be provided to the Association to ensure that all persons involved with the player can comply to the medical advice.

RETURN TO PLAY

Following clearance from a qualified medical practitioner to return to play, the player should progress through a Graduated Return to Play Program as outlined by the Australian Sports Commission in conjunction with the AIS [website](#).

In all cases, the Graduated Return to Play Program provides for a minimum of 14 days symptom-free before the player can return to non-contact training.