

Diagnosis of Concussion

You have been diagnosed with a medical condition called Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)/concussion without loss of consciousness. The ICD10 code for this diagnosis is S06.0X0A. This diagnosis requires an extensive examination by your physician. The diagnosis is determined by listening to you respond to questions about the physics of the injury, your personal subjective experience since your injury, the effects that the injury is having on your quality of life, and usually takes about 2 hours. Concussion can not be diagnosed by medical imaging (MRI, X-Ray, CT), blood work, EEG or EKG tests or any other medical tests. Concussion is defined as “disturbance of brain function”. Concussion is not diagnosed at the ER, however physical damage to the brain may have been diagnosed. Symptoms of: brain injury, headache, loss of consciousness, memory and/or sensory changes, and concussion may exist individually or in any combination.

Concussion is medical condition that occurs when the brain is accelerated suddenly resulting in cognitive damage (explained forthcoming.) Concussions do not require a violent event such as a motor vehicle accident (MVA), a sports collision, a fall, or a blunt force to the head. For example: the highest percentage of concussion in women occurs with cheerleaders. Concussion is worst with rotary forces (if your head was turned, or turned during the event.) Concussion is not associated primarily with mechanical injury, instead it is a complex neuro-metabolic injury. Certain concussions involve a loss of consciousness (LOC.)

Other medical conditions are commonly diagnosed with concussion such as: headache, neck pain, back pain, face pain, pressure in the eyes, hearing problems, breathing and swallowing problems. Patients with a concussion might experience moodiness, depression, memory problems (may not remember the details of the injury, or prior memories), daily activity planning problems, facial and voice recognition problems, unexplained sadness, inappropriate crying, depression, brain fog, confusion, and poor sleep quality. Patients with concussion might experience a feeling of fatigue, nausea, being isolated, misunderstood, frustrated, irritable, nervous, poor mental focus, or feeling ‘crazy.’ Patients with a new concussion might stop doing their usual normal daily routine, stop eating, stop doing personal care or hygiene, stop caring for others, or feel overwhelmed by their own thoughts. Patients with concussion might feel sensitive to light, noise, experience dizziness (especially upon exertion like seated-to-standing), sound, taste, smells, or temperature. They might also have difficulty interpreting language, instructions, or requests to explain themselves. All of this is normal with a diagnosis of concussion and will improve with time. There are no drugs, pills, remedies, supplements, therapies, or treatments that will speed up the process of healing a concussion. The only element that cures concussion is time; the time required for the brain to slowly re-wire to the pre-concussive state. If people around you say that you should “get over it and be normal”, you need to know that your condition takes a lot of time to recover from, and it is not as simple as a choice. Concussion is a short-lived, time-limited condition. TIME is the treatment for concussion; the brain needs time to put the connections back in place.

If your doctor is convinced that your diagnosis is suggestive of concussion, then your physician will also perform exams or history questions for headache, neck pain, arm symptoms such as numbness or weakness. Headache might be present, although not related to the concussion. If so, a full headache exam should be performed. Your physician may ask you to fill-out many forms, especially if it is a personal injury case (PI) and involves a lawyer. In EVERY case of concussion, a lawyer should NEVER direct your medical care. Only a qualified physician that you totally trust should control your care and the case. NEVER sign paperwork that designates a distribution of payments defined by a percentage.

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