

Concussion Guide

Aligned with Rowan's Law and Ontario Soccer Guidelines

1. Purpose

This guide ensures the safety and well-being of all players by providing education, recognition, management, and return-to-play procedures for concussions, in alignment with **Rowan's Law** and sport safety best practices.

2. What is a Concussion?

A **concussion** is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. It can occur even without a direct hit to the head.

Common Signs and Symptoms

- Headache
 - Confusion or feeling dazed
 - Dizziness or balance problems
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Blurred vision
 - Memory problems
 - Mood changes
 - Sleep disturbances
-

3. Rowan's Law Requirements (Ontario)

Under **Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018**, the following are mandatory for all players under 26, parents/guardians (for players under 18), coaches, and team staff:

1. **Annual Review of Concussion Awareness Resources** \ Everyone must review the age-appropriate **Rowan's Law Concussion Awareness Resources** each year: \ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-awareness-resources>
 2. **Concussion Code of Conduct** \ All players, parents (if under 18), coaches, and team staff must review the **Concussion Code of Conduct** annually before participation.
-

4. Suspected Concussion Protocol

If a player is suspected of having a concussion:

Immediately:

- **Remove** the player from play.
- **Do NOT** allow return to play, even if symptoms seem to resolve.
- **Call 911** if emergency symptoms are present (e.g., loss of consciousness, repeated vomiting, seizure, slurred speech).
- **Inform** the player's parent/guardian immediately.
- **Refer** the player to a physician or nurse practitioner for diagnosis.

Documentation:

- Complete a **Concussion Incident Report** and submit it to the club within 24 hours.
-

5. Return-to-Play Protocol

A graduated, medically supervised return-to-play process must be followed. The athlete must be **symptom-free** and cleared by a **medical doctor or nurse practitioner** before returning to full sport.

Stage 1: No Activity

- Complete physical and mental rest (24–48 hours minimum).
- No school, screen time, or physical activity.

Stage 2: Light Aerobic Exercise

- Light activity (e.g., walking or stationary cycling).
- Supervised by adult or coach.
- No resistance training or impact.

Stage 3: Sport-Specific Exercise

- Running drills in soccer.
- No head impact or contact.

Stage 4: Non-Contact Practice

- Full training drills without contact.
- Requires medical clearance to progress to next stage.

Stage 5: Full Contact Practice

- Normal training activities.
- Monitor for any return of symptoms.

Stage 6: Return to Game Play

- Full participation with no restrictions.

Note: Each stage should take a minimum of 24 hours. If symptoms return at any stage, the athlete must return to the previous symptom-free stage and consult with a doctor.

6. Roles & Responsibilities

- **Players:** Report all head injuries and symptoms.
 - **Parents/Guardians:** Monitor and support recovery; ensure medical clearance.
 - **Coaches:** Recognize signs; remove player; follow protocol.
 - **Club Officials:** Maintain records; ensure compliance with Rowan's Law; support education.
-

7. Education & Prevention

- Annual concussion education for all members.
 - Proper heading technique training (for age-appropriate groups).
 - Minimize risky play and enforce safety rules.
 - Use of age-appropriate equipment.
-

8. Resources

- [Rowan's Law Resources \(Ontario\)](#)
 - [Ontario Soccer Concussion Policy](#)
-

9. Contact

For concussion-related inquiries or to submit reports: \ **Club Safety Officer** – Natalie Walker \ **Club Website:** www.romasoccer.com
