

## Pickleball Hamilton Association PreSeason Concussion Education Sheet

### WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that can't be seen on x-rays, CT or MRI scans. It affects the way an athlete thinks and can cause a variety of symptoms.

### WHAT CAUSES A CONCUSSION?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or somewhere else on the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion. Examples include getting body-checked in hockey or hitting one's head on the floor in gym class.

### WHEN SHOULD I SUSPECT A CONCUSSION?

A concussion should be suspected in any player who sustains a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body and reports *ANY* symptoms or demonstrates *ANY* visual signs of a concussion. A concussion should also be suspected if a player reports *ANY* concussion symptoms to one of their peers, or coaches or if anyone witnesses a player exhibiting *ANY* of the visual signs of concussion. Some players will develop symptoms immediately while others will develop delayed symptoms (beginning 24 hours to 48 hours after the injury).

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

A person does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. Common symptoms include:

- ▶ Headaches or head pressure
- ▶ Dizziness
- ▶ Nausea and vomiting
- ▶ Blurred or fuzzy vision
- ▶ Sensitivity to light or sound
- ▶ Balance problems
- ▶ Feeling tired or having no energy
- ▶ Not thinking clearly
- ▶ Feeling slowed down
- ▶ Easily upset or angered
- ▶ Sadness
- ▶ Nervousness or anxiety
- ▶ Feeling more emotional
- ▶ Sleeping more or sleeping less
- ▶ Having a hard time falling asleep
- ▶ Difficulty working on a computer
- ▶ Difficulty reading
- ▶ Difficulty learning new information

### WHAT ARE THE VISUAL SIGNS OF A CONCUSSION?

Visual signs of a concussion may include:

- ▶ Lying motionless on the playing surface
- ▶ Slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head
- ▶ Disorientation or confusion or inability to respond appropriately to questions
- ▶ Blank or vacant stare
- ▶ Balance, gait difficulties, motor incoordination, stumbling, slow labored movements
- ▶ Facial injury after head trauma
- ▶ Clutching head

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT A CONCUSSION?

If any player is suspected of sustaining a concussion during sports they should be immediately removed from play. Any player who is suspected of having sustained a concussion during sports must not be allowed to return to the same game or practice.

**It is important that ALL players with a suspected concussion undergo medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, as soon as possible. It is also important that ALL players with a suspected concussion receive written medical clearance from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to sport activities.**

### WHEN CAN THE PLAYER RETURN TO PICKLEBALL?

It is important that all players diagnosed with a concussion follow a steps wise return to pickleball related activities.

#### Sport-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy<sup>1</sup>

Stage	Aim	Activity	Goal of each step
1	Symptom-limiting activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms.	Gradual re-introduction of work/school activities.
2	Light aerobic activity	Walking or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training.	Increase heart rate.
3	Sport-specific exercise	Running or skating drills. No head impact activities.	Add movement.
4	Non-contact training drills	Harder training drills, e.g. passing drills. May start progressive resistance training.	Exercise, coordination and increased thinking.
5	Full contact practice	Following medical clearance and complete return to school.	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff.
6	Return to sport	Normal game play.	

### HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR THE PLAYER TO RECOVER?

Most players who sustain a concussion will make a complete recovery within 1 to 2 weeks while most youth players will recover within 1 to 4 weeks. Approximately 15% 30% of patients will experience persistent symptoms (>2 weeks for adults; >4 weeks for youth) that may require additional medical assessment and management.

### HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT CONCUSSIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES?

Concussion prevention, recognition and management require athletes to follow the rules and regulations of their sport, respect their opponents, avoid head contact, and report suspected concussions.

#### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CONCUSSIONS PLEASE VISIT:

Parachute Canada: [www.parachute.ca/concussion](http://www.parachute.ca/concussion)

**SIGNATURES (OPTIONAL)** : The following signatures certify that the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian have reviewed the above information related to concussion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name of player

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of player

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date