

Mesquite ISD Preseason Parental Information and Consent Form for Concussions

What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain. It is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to either the head or the body that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull. The resulting injury to the brain changes how the brain functions in a normal manner. The signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up immediately after the injury or may not appear for hours or days after the injury. Concussions can have serious long-term health effects, and even a seemingly mild injury can be serious. A major concern with any concussion is returning to play too soon. Having a second concussion before healing can take place from the initial or previous concussion can lead to serious and potentially fatal health conditions.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

Signs and symptoms of a concussion are typically noticed right after the injury, but some might not be recognized until days after the injury. Common symptoms include: headache, dizziness, amnesia, fatigue, confusion, mood changes, depression, poor vision, sensitivity to light or noise, lethargy, poor attention or concentration, sleep disturbances, and aggression. The individual may or may not have lost consciousness.

What should be done if a concussion is suspected?

1. Immediately remove student from practice or game
2. Seek medical attention right away
3. Do not allow the student to return to play until proper medical clearance and return to play guidelines have been followed. The permission for return to play will come from the appropriate health care professional or professionals.

If you have any questions concerning concussions or the return to play policy, you may contact the athletic administrator at your school.

What should the athlete know about playing with a concussion?

Teach athletes it's not smart to play with a concussion. Rest is the key after a concussion. Sometimes athletes, parents, and other school or league officials wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let your athlete convince you that they're "just fine."

What are the risks of returning to activity too soon after sustaining a concussion?

Prevent long-term problems. If an athlete has a concussion, their brain needs time to heal. Don't let them return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short time period (hours, days, weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the chances for long-term problems.

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

Liability Provisions

The student and the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student understands this policy does not:

1. waive any immunity from liability of a school district or open-enrollment charter school or of district of charter school officers or employees;
2. create any liability for a cause of action against a school district or open-enrollment charter school or against district or charter school officers or employees;
3. waive any immunity from liability under Section 74.151, Civil Practice and Remedies Code;
4. create any liability for a member of a concussion oversight team arising from the injury or death of a student participating in an interscholastic athletics practice of competition, based only on service on the concussion oversight team.

Parental Consent

By signing this form, I understand the risks and dangers related with returning to play too soon after a concussion. Furthermore, in the event that my son/daughter is diagnosed with a concussion, I give my consent for my son/daughter to participate in and comply with the Mesquite ISD return to play protocol. The undersigned, being a parent, guardian, or another person with legal authority, grants this permission.

Athlete's Name (print) _____

Parent's or Guardian's Name (print) _____

Parent's or Guardian's Signature _____

Date: _____