



# CONCUSSION

**A Must Read for NFL Players** ... Let's Take Brain Injuries Out of Play

## CONCUSSION FACTS

- > Concussion is a *brain injury* that alters the way your brain functions.
- > Concussion can occur from a blow to the head/body:
  - following helmet to helmet contact, and/or
  - contact with the ground, object, or another player.
- > Most concussions occur without being knocked unconscious.
- > *Severity of injury depends on many factors* and is not known until symptoms resolve and brain function is back to normal.
- > *All concussions are not created equally.* Each player is different, each injury is different, and all injuries should be evaluated by your team medical staff.

## CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS

Different symptoms can occur and may not show up for several hours. Common symptoms include:

- Confusion
- Headache
- Amnesia/difficulty remembering
- Balance problems
- Irritability
- Dizziness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling sluggish, foggy, or groggy
- Nausea
- Sensitivity to noise
- Sensitivity to light
- Double/fuzzy vision
- Slowed reaction time
- Feeling more emotional
- Sleep disturbances
- Loss of consciousness

*Symptoms may worsen with physical or mental exertion (e.g., lifting, computer use, reading).*

## WHY SHOULD I REPORT MY SYMPTOMS?

- > Your brain is the most vital organ in your body.
- > Practicing or playing while still experiencing symptoms can prolong the time it takes to recover and return to play.
- > Unlike other injuries, there may be significant consequences to “playing through” a concussion.
- > Repetitive brain injury, when not managed promptly and properly, may cause permanent damage to your brain.

\*For more information about concussion and other types of traumatic brain injuries, go to

[www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion)

## What Should I Do if I Think I've Had a Concussion?

**REPORT IT.** Never ignore symptoms even if they appear mild. Look out for your teammates. Tell your Athletic Trainer or Team Physician if you think you or a teammate may have a concussion.

**GET CHECKED OUT.** Your team medical staff has your health and well being as its first priority. They will manage your concussion according to NFL/NFLPA Guidelines which include being fully asymptomatic, both at rest and after exertion, and having a normal neurologic examination, normal neuropsychological testing, and clearance to play by both the team medical staff and the independent neurologic consultant.

**TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN.** According to CDC\*, “traumatic brain injury can cause a wide range of short- or long-term changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions.” These changes may lead to problems with memory and communication, personality changes, as well as depression and the early onset of dementia. Concussions and conditions resulting from repeated brain injury can change your life and your family's life forever.

Work smart. Use your head, don't lead with it. Help make our game safer. **Other athletes are watching...**

