



Lancashire RFU Concussion Management Protocol

Definition of Concussion

Concussion is a complex process caused by the result of direct or indirect trauma to the brain that results in temporary brain function impairment.

General Principles

Concussion must be taken seriously in order to safeguard the welfare of the player. Sporting excellence is important but not at the expense of player health.

If Concussion is suspected then he or she must be removed from the field of play/activity for assessment and may not return to play for that match. They **MUST** be assessed by a qualified medical practitioner. If the player is diagnosed with Concussion then they will go through a process of rest followed by graduated return to play (GRTP). Players can only return to play once they have been cleared by a qualified medical practitioner. Any player diagnosed with Concussion will be **unavailable** for all contact sport for a **MINIMUM of 23 days**. There will be **NO EXCEPTIONS**.

Diagnosis and Management of Concussion

If a player has a suspected Concussion whilst playing for or at **(Name of Club / School)** then the supervising coaches / staff will alert a suitably qualified health care professional who will as soon as is practicably possible assess the player.

Indicator	Evidence
Symptoms	Headache, dizziness, "feeling in a fog"
Physical signs	Loss of consciousness, vacant expression, vomiting, inappropriate playing behaviour, unsteady on legs, slowed reactions
Behavioural changes	Inappropriate emotions, irritability, feeling nervous or anxious
Cognitive impairment	Slowed reaction times, confusion/disorientation, poor attention and concentration, loss of memory for events up to and/or after the concussion
Sleep disturbance	Drowsiness

If any signs or symptoms are identified then five memory questions will be asked

Memory questions:

- At what venue are we today?
- Which half is it now?
- Who scored last in this game?
- Which team did you play last week/game?
- Did your team win the last game?

If the player fails to answer the memory questions then he/she must be removed from the field of play for further assessment. He/she **MUST NOT** return to play once removed from the field. The Medical Practitioner or suitable qualified healthcare professional will use the SCAT 3 diagnostic tool for players 10 years and over.

For players returning from away matches with suspected Concussion, the parents must be contacted before arriving back at club/school and the player/pupil collected by parents/designated person.

Once Concussion has been diagnosed, players/pupils will receive an RFU Headcase leaflet providing necessary information. The player/pupil must rest for 48 hours from all physical & cognitive (academic) activities. If he/she is symptom free then he/she must still refrain from **ALL** physical activity for a further 14 days.

At the end of this 16 day period the player will be assessed by a suitably qualified health care professional and a GRTP will commence as laid out in the diagram below. Stage 2 – 4 will be 48 hours per stage as long as there are no issues or recurrence of symptoms. In this instance the player goes back to the rest stage for 48 hours again.

Stage	Rehabilitation Stage	Exercise Allowed	Objective
1	Rest	Complete physical and cognitive rest without symptoms	Recovery
2	Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity, <70% maximum predicted heart rate. No resistance training.	Increase heart rate and assess recovery
3	Sport-specific exercise	Running drills. No head impact activities.	Add movement and assess recovery
4	Non-contact training drills	Progression to more complex training drills, e.g. passing drills. May start progressive resistance training.	Add exercise + coordination, and cognitive load. Assess recovery
5	Full Contact Practice	Normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff. Assess recovery
6	Return to Play	Player rehabilitated	Safe return to play once fully recovered.

Once this GRTP has been completed a further assessment by a qualified medical practitioner is necessary to clear the player for return to play. All head injuries must be recorded on a 'Head Injuries register'.

The earliest players/pupils will be able to return to play will be 23 days post-concussion.

Further information available at: <http://www.rfu.com/headcase>