

Temiskaming Hospital

March 26, 2008

CONCUSSION AND WHEN TO RETURN TO SPORTS?

A concussion is a jarring injury to the brain. A person does not have to pass out to have a concussion as is commonly thought. They may feel dazed or confused. Concussions can be serious and may require a person to be temporarily removed from a sport. Concussions cannot be seen on x-rays or CT scans.

There is a long list of symptoms of concussion:

- A person's thinking could be disturbed so that they can't remember the time or date, or the score of the game they were playing;
- They may not be able to remember things for quite a few minutes prior to the injury, or they may be generally confused;
- They could also experience a feeling of being 'dazed' or 'stunned';
- They may complain of dizziness, headache, seeing stars, ringing in the ears, stomach ache, nausea or even vomiting;
- You may notice their speech is slurred or they are slow to answer questions;
- They may show poor coordination or balance.

Anyone suspected of having a concussion should stop their sport and get medical attention right away. They should not return to sports until they receive 'medical clearance'.

A person needs to be completely back to normal before it is safe to return to sports after a concussion. This is usually achieved by rest – both physical and mental. A person may need to avoid activities that require concentration and attention such as reading or school work. Once completely better, they will be instructed by their doctor to gradually increase their activity. These prescribed stages take a minimum of several days to complete, and could take longer if any symptoms come back as the exertion is increased.

To see Hockey Canada's recommended steps for return to sport, go to www.hockeycanada.ca.



Temiskaming Hospital
(705) 647-8121
www.temihosp.on.ca

Visiting Hours:

- 1000 to 2000 hours for medical patients, surgical patients and Long-Term Care patients;
- 1400 to 1600 hours and 1800 to 2000 hours for obstetrics;
- Visitors to the Special Care Unit (SCU) are restricted to immediate family and/or significant other(s).