

Bates College Post-Concussion Handout

You have been diagnosed with a concussion by your athletic trainer, team doctor, or coach. A concussion is any change in neurologic function resulting from a blow to the head or body.

What to Expect:

You may have any of the following symptoms: headache, blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, double vision, wanting to sleep too much or having trouble sleeping, personality changes, trouble concentrating, ringing in your ears, loss of appetite, feeling "in a fog", losing short-term memory or having a gap in your memory. These are the most common symptoms but there may be others.

What do I do now?

- **Physical and mental rest** early on can help your concussion from getting worse or lasting longer. Avoid parties, loud noise, heavy concentration, fast video games, bright lights, or prolonged reading or computer screen time.
- Avoid any alcohol or mind-altering substances.
- If you are taking any regular prescription medications, continue to do so. If you have any questions, contact your prescribing physician.
- You do not need to be woken up from sleep through the night, but you do need to have a responsible, reliable adult with you for the first 24 hrs to ensure that you are doing OK.
- Avoid any activities which cause worsening symptoms: you may need a note for delayed schoolwork if reading or computer time are worsening your symptoms. Notify your athletic trainer if so and a note will be arranged if appropriate.
- Check in with your athletic trainer or team physician regularly to update them honestly and accurately about your symptoms.

When can I return to sports?

- This is difficult to predict, and depends on how long your symptoms last, how many concussions you have had in the past, and cognitive testing. You will have to be cleared by the Athletic Training staff after consultation with a team physician.

When do I need to go to the Emergency Room?

- Any significant progression of symptoms despite rest in the first 24 hours.
- Any slurred speech, focal muscle weakness, facial droop, loss of speech, or seizures warrant immediate medical attention. If others find you difficult to arouse, this also warrants an ER visit.
- Any concerns or questions about your condition which needs urgent attention.

