

RUGBY AUSTRALIA HEAD INJURY FACT SHEET

PLAYER INFORMATION

You have suffered a concussion or suspected concussion.

The signs and symptoms of concussion may occur immediately or may develop over minutes, hours or days. It is possible that people feel better soon after a head injury, but that does not mean they have not suffered a concussion. The changes in your brain may develop over some time and may persist for days and weeks, even after a relatively minor hit.

Some of the signs of concussion include (but are not limited to);

- Suspected or definite loss of consciousness
- Disorientation
- Incoherent speech
- Confusion
- Memory loss
- Dazed or vacant stare
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sensitivity to light
- Ringing in the ears
- Fatigue
- Vomiting
- Blurred vision
- Loss of balance

Rugby Australia takes concussion very seriously and if there is any doubt, Rugby Australia has instructed all participants to err on the side of caution. Therefore, the message for all players' is

IF IN DOUBT SIT THEM OUT

WHAT TO DO

Having been recognised as having a potential concussion injury, you should next make an appointment to see a medical doctor in the next 1-2 days.

You must now follow Rugby Australia Standard Care Pathway of concussion management

Rugby Australia Concussion Procedure

1. Recognise
2. Remove
3. Record – by team manager on match scorecard & in Rugby Link
4. Refer – to a medical doctor for assessment and guidance on process
5. Rest – mandatory rest periods
6. Recover – return to school, study or work before returning to exercise including rugby
7. Record – by competition manager after receiving clearance from doctor
8. Return – return to play following successful graduated return to play (GRTP) programme

The first three steps have already occurred – you have been recognised as having a potential concussion injury, and have been removed from playing or training. Your team manager will now record your injury on Rugby Link.

You must now follow the remainder of the pathway starting with referral to a medical doctor. This may be a GP or a specialist Sports and Exercise Physician or another medical doctor. It may not be a physiotherapist, chiropractor, osteopath, trainer, or masseur.

This medical doctor will assess you and guide your progress over the next steps in the process. Whilst waiting to see the medical doctor, you should take things quietly and be in the care of a responsible adult at all times.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Be left alone
- Drink alcohol
- Drive a car
- Handle heavy machinery
- Swim alone
- Watch TV or play computer games if they irritate your symptoms
- Take anti-inflammatory medications or any pain killer stronger than Panadol unless instructed by your doctor

RED FLAGS

The signs and symptoms of concussion can sometimes be the same as more severe head injuries. If the following signs and symptoms occur, they may be a sign that there is something more serious happening. These are called RED FLAGS and if they occur you should immediately attend the nearest Accident and Emergency Centre, or ring 000 for an ambulance.

- Deteriorating conscious state (i.e. becoming drowsier)
- Increasing confusion or irritability
- Behaving unusually or a change in their normal behavior
- Fit, seizure or convulsions
- Double vision
- Slurred speech
- Continuing unsteadiness on their feet
- Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs
- Severe or increasing headache
- Repeated vomiting – more than once etc.
- Severe or unusual neck pain

“Rugby Australia Concussion Guidance” provides information on the process and the obligations on all participants (including you). It is important that you read this document and understand your obligations.

For further information please refer to Rugby Australia Concussion Guidance – Rugby Public Standard Care Pathway and www.aru.com.au/concussion

NOTE: A player must provide a completed Rugby Australia Concussion Referral & Return form to their team manager for presentation/submission to the competition manager prior to returning to full-contact training and/or match play.

**As of 31 January 2018*