

# **New Milford Recreation**

## **New Milford Recreation Policy and Procedures for Management of Sports Related Concussion**

Adopted on April 4, 2012

*The information in this document has been developed by the NMHS Certified Athletic Trainer and reviewed by the school's physician.*

**Table of Contents:**

I. Introduction to sports related concussion..... Pg 3

II. Recognition of concussion.....Pg 4

III. Management and referral guidelines for all staff.....Pg 5

IV. Guidelines and procedures for Coaches and Sport Coordinators.....Pg 6-7

V. Return to play procedures..... Pg 8

## I. Introduction

Medical management of sports-related concussions is evolving. In recent years, there has been significant research into sports-related concussions in high school athletes. As a result, New Milford Recreation has established this protocol and procedures manual to provide education about concussion for our sport coordinators and coaches. This manual outlines procedures for coaches to follow in managing head injuries and outlines recreation policy as it pertains to return to play issues after concussion.

New Milford Recreation seeks to provide a safe return to activity for all athletes after injury, particularly after a concussion. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, procedures have been developed to aid in insuring that concussed athletes are identified, treated, referred and receive appropriate follow-up medical care. It is recommended that the athlete be seen by an appropriate physician (i.e. sports medicine or neurologist). **Under no circumstance will an athlete be cleared by a chiropractor or emergency room physician.**

This document is currently mandated by the NJSIAA and the information is based from their recommendations regarding concussions. Along with the policy and procedures, the NJSIAA recommends an educational meeting with all coordinators and coaches, as well as an information fact sheet to be handed out to the parents.

This protocol will be reviewed on a yearly basis by New Milford Recreation. Any changes or modifications will be reviewed and given to the director, sport coordinators, coaches and parents in writing.

All sport coordinators and coaches will attend a yearly in-service meeting in which procedures for managing sports-related concussions are discussed. Other training may include parents and players. The parents will receive an information sheet provided with the permission form packet.

## II. Recognition of concussion

Common signs and symptoms of sports-related concussion

<b><u>Signs (observed by others):</u></b>	<b><u>Symptoms (reported by athlete):</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Athlete appears dazed or stunned</li><li>• Confusion (about assignment, plays, etc.)</li><li>• Forgets plays</li><li>• Unsure about game, score, opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily (altered coordination)</li><li>• Balance problems</li><li>• Personality change</li><li>• Responds slowly to questions</li><li>• Forgets events prior to hit (contact or incident)</li><li>• Forgets events after the hit (contact or incident)</li><li>• Loss of consciousness (any duration)</li><li>• Abnormal behavior or movements after collision or blow to head/neck</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headache</li><li>• Pressure in head</li><li>• Fatigue</li><li>• Not “feeling right” or “feeling down”</li><li>• Nausea or vomiting</li><li>• Double vision, blurry vision</li><li>• Sensitive to light or noise</li><li>• Feels sluggish</li><li>• Feels “foggy”</li><li>• Problems concentrating</li><li>• Problems remembering</li></ul>

These signs and symptoms are indicative of probable concussion. Other causes for symptoms will also be considered.

### III. Management and Referral Guidelines for All Staff

#### Suggested Guidelines for Management of Sports-Related Concussion<sup>i</sup>

1. Any athlete with a witnessed loss of consciousness (LOC) of any duration should be spine boarded and transported immediately to nearest emergency department **via emergency vehicle**.
2. Any athlete who has symptoms of a concussion and who is not stable (i.e., condition is changing or deteriorating) should be transported immediately to the nearest emergency department **via emergency vehicle**.
3. An athlete who exhibits any of the following symptoms will be transported immediately to the nearest emergency department **via emergency vehicle**.
  - a. deterioration of neurological function
  - b. decreasing level of consciousness
  - c. decrease or irregularity in respirations
  - d. decrease or irregularity in pulse
  - e. unequal, dilated, or unreactive pupils
  - f. any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
  - g. mental status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion or agitation
  - h. seizure activity
  - i. cranial nerve deficits
  - j. persistent inability to walk or coordinate movements
4. Athletes should be transported to emergency rooms under the following circumstances:
  - a) An athlete who is diagnosed or evaluated as exhibiting items in III.3.A above are considered to be in serious condition. As such, the athlete **SHOULD NOT** be transported by his or her parents to the emergency room service point, but rather by emergency services personnel to protect the athlete.
  - b) An athlete who is diagnosed or evaluated as having a concussion, but not falling into any category in III.3.A above may be transported only by the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the athlete at their discretion.
  - c) Parents shall always have the right to determine which hospital or emergency facility is to be selected for patient delivery.
  - d) **ALWAYS** give parents the option of emergency transportation, even if you do not feel it is necessary

#### IV. Guidelines and procedures for Coaches and Sport Coordinators:

##### **RECOGNIZE, REMOVE, REFER**

###### A. **RECOGNIZE** concussion

All coaches will become familiar with the signs and symptoms of concussion that are described in section II.

###### B. **REMOVE** from activity

1. If a coach suspects the athlete has sustained a concussion, the athlete **will** be removed from activity until evaluated medically.
  - a. **Any athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion will be removed immediately, assessed, and WILL NOT be allowed to return to activity (play or practice) that day.**

###### C. **REFER** the athlete for medical evaluation

1. Immediate referral to an appropriate physician or to the hospital will be made when medically appropriate (see section III.3).
2. Coaches will report all head injuries to sport coordinator, as soon as possible, for management, and for coordination of home instructions and follow-up care (if applicable).
  - a. The sport coordinator will be responsible for contacting the athlete's parents and providing follow-up instructions including where to find the necessary insurance forms.
3. If the athlete is injured at an away event, the coach is responsible for notifying the athlete's parents of the injury.
  - a. Contact the parent(s) to inform them of the injury and make arrangements for them to pick the athlete up at the game or practice or at the medical treatment facility.
  - b. Contact the sport coordinator with the athlete's name and home phone number, so that follow-up can be initiated.

4. In the event that an athlete's parent(s) cannot be reached and the athlete is able to be sent home, rather than directly to an MD:
  - a. The Coach will insure that the athlete will be with a responsible individual, who is capable of monitoring the athlete and understanding the home care instructions, before allowing the athlete to go home.
  - b. The Coach will continue efforts to reach the parent(s).
  - c. If there is any question about the status of the athlete, or if the athlete is not able to be monitored appropriately, the athlete will be referred to the emergency department for evaluation. A coach will accompany the athlete and remain with the athlete until the parents arrive.
  - d. Athletes with suspected head injuries **will not** be permitted to leave without a parent or legal guardian.

## V. RETURN TO PLAY (RTP) PROCEDURES AFTER CONCUSSION

### A. Returning to participate on the same day of injury

1. As previously discussed in this document, an athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms of concussion **WILL NEVER** be permitted to return to play on the day of the injury.
2. Coaches should follow the “when in doubt, hold them out” rule and have the authority to hold an athlete out of play if they feel the athlete is in no condition to participate.

### B. Return to play after a diagnosed concussion

Under no circumstances will an athlete be allowed to participate in a practice or game in any manner without full documentation from an appropriate physician stating that the athlete is cleared.

---

<sup>i</sup> Guskiewicz KM, et al

5 McCrory P, et al Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Zurich 2008.