



Rowan's Law Concussion Awareness and Preseason Chat Acknowledgement

ATOM AND BELOW

Participating in sports and other activities is fun and healthy. But sometimes when you play you can hurt yourself. Did you know you can even hurt your brain?

Hurting your brain is different from other injuries. If you sprain your ankle, you can see it get all red and puffy. But when you hurt your brain, it doesn't show on the outside because it's inside your head!

One kind of brain injury is called a concussion. Today we are going to talk about concussions and what to do if you think you might have one. Your brain is very important, so you want to keep it safe!

What is a concussion?

A concussion happens when your brain moves around inside your head. A hard bump to your head, neck, or body can cause a concussion. For example, you can get a concussion if you are hit in the head with a ball, or if you fall down hard onto the floor.

A concussion is a serious injury. Most people get better quickly but some people have long-term problems with their memory or how they feel.

Learning about concussions can help you stay safe.

In hockey you should:

- Make sure your equipment is in good shape, it fits, and you are wearing it properly.
- Listen to your coach or trainer when they give you instructions, like putting your equipment away in the change room so no one trips on it.
- Talk to your parents about the Concussion Code of Conduct
- And if you get hurt and don't feel right, make sure to tell a parent, coach, trainer, or other adult you trust so they can help.

Your brain controls how you think, feel and move. Hurting your brain can affect you in lots of ways.

Here are some common signs that might tell you if you have a concussion:

You have a headache, you feel dizzy, you throw up or feel like you are going to throw up, your vision is blurry, lights and sounds bother you, there is a ringing sound in your ears, you have balance problems or feel "wobbly", you feel really tired, or you just "don't feel right".

Emotional symptoms of a concussion can be that you are upset or grumpy, more sad than usual, or feeling nervous or anxious for no real reason.



Concussions can also cause thinking problems, like feeling confused, having trouble concentrating, and forgetting things, like what happened before you got hurt. They can also change how you sleep. You might sleep more than usual, less than usual, or have trouble falling asleep.

What to do if you think you have a concussion?

If you have one or more of these symptoms you should:

1. Stop playing.
2. Tell your coach, the trainer, your parent, or another adult.
3. Get checked out by your doctor.
4. Rest and recover.

When you have a concussion, rest is the first step for getting better.

You will have to stop doing things for a bit if they make you feel worse, such as playing video games, school work, using a phone or tablet, playing sports, or taking part in gym class.

You also need to get proper sleep.

Some concussions can take months to recover from. And if you have already had a concussion before, you are at a greater risk of doing more damage if you get another one.

As your brain heals, you will slowly get back to your usual activities at school, at play and in sport. Getting back to your full routine at school is an important step in getting better. First, you will do simple things such as reading and going for short walks.

Once you can do things like this without feeling worse, you can move to the next step. As long as you feel OK, your parents, coaches and teachers will help you add more activities, such as running, playing with friends, attending school, and practicing your sport. The last step will be taking part in games or competitions.

Your doctor will tell you when it's OK to go back to your activities.

Playing safe will help prevent you from getting injured so that you can keep doing things you love!

REMEMBER: If you think you might have a concussion:

1. Stop playing.
2. Tell an adult.
3. Get checked by a doctor.
4. Rest and recover.



We also want to talk to you quickly today about what is called our Code of Conduct, which is a fancy way of saying “how we expect you to behave”. Just like at school, our hockey league has rules to help make sure everyone has a fun and safe time.

When your parents signed you up for hockey, they agreed to follow the Parents Code of Conduct. The coaches have their own Code of Conduct, the referees have a Code of Conduct, and players have one too.

This is the players’ Code of Conduct:

- ✓ I will play hockey because I want to, not just because others or coaches want me to
- ✓ I will play by the rules of hockey, and in the spirit of the game
- ✓ I will control my temper – fighting and “mouthing off” can spoil the activity for everybody
- ✓ I will respect my opponents
- ✓ I will do my best to be a true team player
- ✓ I will remember that winning isn’t everything - that having fun, improving skills, making friends, and doing my best are also important
- ✓ I will acknowledge all good plays/performances – those of my team and of my opponents
- ✓ I will remember that coaches and referees are here to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.

Just like in school, CYO Minor Hockey also has an anti-bullying policy. This means we do not tolerate bullying or talking bad about someone, no matter if it is to their face, or to other people.

We are a team, and that means we need to respect each other. If someone has a bad game, we don’t tease them about it—we make them feel better. We support each other, win or lose.

If anyone notices or hears someone being mean or disrespectful to another player, please let your coach or your parents know so we can help.

There might be some players on our team who do not change in the room with everyone. That does not mean that they are not part of the team—it just means they are getting dressed somewhere else. The coaches will make sure that everyone is here for the pre-game chat and for our after-game talk.

Remember, we are a team, no matter where you get dressed.

We leave the dressing room as a team, and we come back as a team.

QUESTIONS?