



Rowan's Law Concussion Awareness and Preseason Chat Acknowledgement

PEEWEE AND UP

Preventing injuries is important to keeping people active throughout their lives. Some injuries are easy to see and treat but what about an injury inside the head? Brain injuries, such as concussions, don't show on the outside and are not always obvious. Even when you can't see the injury, a person with a concussion still feels the effects and needs the proper care to get better.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. It can't be seen on X-rays or through other medical procedures such as CT scans or MRIs. Having a concussion may affect the way you think, feel and act.

Any blow to the head, face or neck may cause a concussion. A concussion may also be caused by a blow to the body if the force of the blow causes the brain to move around inside the skull. Examples include being hit in the head with a ball or falling hard onto the floor.

A concussion is a serious injury. While the effects are typically short-term, a concussion can lead to long-lasting symptoms and even long-term effects, such as memory problems or depression.

Learning about concussions can help you stay safe.

In hockey you should:

- Make sure your equipment is in good condition, it fits, and you are wearing it properly.
- Respect the rules of the sport
- Talk to your parents about the Concussion Code of Conduct
- Report injuries to an adult you trust like a parent, coach, or teacher.
- Understand the importance of speaking up to avoid the risks of further injury

If you have a concussion you might have one or more signs or symptoms. They might show up right away or hours, even days, later. Just one sign or symptom is enough to suspect a concussion.

REMEMBER: Most people with a concussion do not lose consciousness.

Common signs and symptoms of a concussion are:

Headache, pressure in the head, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, blurry vision, sensitive to light or sound, ringing in your ears, balance problems, tired or low energy, drowsiness, or you just "don't feel right".

Emotional symptoms of a concussion can be that you are irritable, easily upset or angered, depressed, sad, nervous, or anxious.



Concussions can also cause cognitive problems, like not thinking clearly, slower thinking, confusion, problems concentrating, or problems remembering. Concussions can also cause sleep-related problems such as sleeping more or less than usual, or having a hard time falling asleep.

Red Flags with concussions mean you may have a more serious injury. Treat these symptoms as an emergency and call 911!

- Neck pain or tenderness
- Double vision
- Weakness or tingling in the arms or legs
- Severe or increasing headache
- Seizure or convulsions
- Loss of consciousness (if you were knocked out)
- Vomiting more than once
- Increasingly restless, agitated, or aggressive
- Getting more and more confused

What to do if you think you have a concussion?

If you think you have a concussion, stop the activity right away. Tell a parent, coach, teacher or another trusted adult how you feel. If you're not with your parent or guardian, have someone call them to come get you. You should not be left alone.

See a doctor as soon as possible. You should not return to sport until you have received medical clearance to do so even if you think you are OK.

Most people with a concussion get better in a few weeks—others take months to recover from. Each concussion is unique – don't compare one person's recovery to another's.

It's possible for a concussion to have long-term effects. People may experience symptoms, such as headaches, neck pain or vision problems, that last for months, or even years. Some may have lasting changes in their brain that lead to issues such as memory loss, concentration problems or depression. In rare cases, a person who suffers multiple brain injuries without healing in between may develop dangerous swelling in their brain, a condition known as second impact syndrome, that can result in severe disability or death.

While you're recovering, you shouldn't do activities that may make your symptoms worse. This may mean limiting activities such as exercising, school work, or time on your phone, computer or TV.

Healing from a concussion is a process that takes patience. Rushing back to activities can make symptoms worse and recovery longer. **And if you have already had a concussion before, you are at a greater risk of doing more damage if you get another one.**



Anyone who has a concussion should let others know. This includes parents, all sport teams/clubs, schools, coaches and educators.

And remember, returning to school comes before returning to unrestricted sport.

If you are diagnosed by a physician as having a concussion, you must follow your sport's return-to-sport protocol and/or your school's return-to-school plan, where applicable. The return-to-sport protocol is a list of steps that you must follow before you can return to sport. You must not go back to participating in training, practice or competition until a physician says it's OK for you to do so.

The CYO follows the guidelines set out by Hockey Canada and Alliance Hockey which require a player who has been diagnosed with a concussion to be medically cleared by a physician before they are allowed on the ice.

Most return-to-sport protocols suggest that athletes should rest for 24 to 48 hours before starting any gradual return to sport.

When it comes to concussions, remember:

1. Recognize signs and symptoms of a concussion and stop activity immediately, even if you think you might be OK. Tell an adult.
2. Get checked out by a physician.
3. Gradually return to school and sport.



We also want to talk to you quickly today about our Code of Conduct, which is how the CYO expects you to behave.

When your parents registered you, 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 the players have a code of conduct.

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.

CYO Minor Hockey believes in fair play for everyone. We do not tolerate bullying or talking bad about someone, no matter if it is to their face, or to other people. Every player at the CYO has an equal right to respect and fair treatment.

We are a team, and that means we need to respect each other. We support each other, win or lose.

If anyone notices anyone bullying or being mean 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 the post-game talk.

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

And if any one of you needs any special accommodations at any time for changing, you or your parents can let the coaches, your parish leader, or someone from the league know. We respect everyone's privacy, and the reason for your request will be kept confidential.

QUESTIONS?