

Ascot Vale Panthers Junior Football Club

Concussion Management Policy

Purpose

To provide guidance to trainers, first aiders, coaches and parents in relation to the management of concussion during matches

Summary

In the early stages of injury, it is often not clear whether you are dealing with a concussion or there is a more severe underlying structural head injury. For this reason, the most important steps in initial management include:

- Recognising a suspected concussion;
- Removing the player from the game; and
- Referring the player to a medical doctor for assessment.

Any player who has suffered a concussion or is suspected of having a concussion must be medically assessed as soon as possible after the injury and must NOT be allowed to return to play in the same game/practice session.

There should be an accredited first aider at every game and the basic rules of first aid should be used when dealing with any player who is unconscious or injured.

Symptom evaluation in the child often requires the addition of parent's input, but the trainer has the final word on whether a child can return to the game.

The child is not to return to football, until he/she has successfully returned to school/learning, is symptom-free, and has received medical clearance in the event of a confirmed concussion.

Management guidelines for suspected concussion during play

A confirmed or suspected knock to the head or the presence of any concussion symptoms after an on-field collision (e.g. stunned, confusion, memory problems, balance problems, headache, dizziness, not feeling right)



Remove from the ground.
Assess using the AFL endorsed 'HeadCheck' App. The Team Manager must step into the trainers role whilst the trainer conducts the assessment.



Check for the presence of any red flags
(e.g. neck pain, loss of consciousness, confusion, vomiting, worsening headache)

YES



Call for ambulance and refer to hospital

NO



Do not allow player to return to play for one full quarter to ensure no concussion.
After the match refer to a medical professional for assessment if required.

Recognising a suspected concussion

The symptoms listed below are designed to help Coaches/Trainers identify a suspected concussion. They are not meant to replace a more comprehensive medical assessment and should never be used as a stand-alone tool for the management of concussion. Any suspected concussion should be referred to a medical profession for further assessment.

Any one or more of the following visual clues can indicate a possible concussion:

- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Lying motionless on ground/slow to get up
- Vomiting
- Seizure or convulsion
- Unsteady on feet/balance problems or falling over/incoordination
- Grabbing/clutching of head
- Dazed, blank or vacant look
- Confused/not aware of plays or events
- Facial injury

Symptoms reported by the player that should raise suspicion of concussion include:

- Headache
- Nausea or feel like vomiting
- Blurred vision
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Feeling “dinged” or “dazed”
- “Don’t feel right”
- Sensitivity to light or noise,
- More emotional or irritable than usual
- Sadness, nervous/anxious
- Neck pain
- Feeling slowed down, feeling like in a fog
- Difficulty concentrating or difficulty remembering

Please refer to the AFL Concussion Recognition Tool 5 for further guidance.