

The Colorado Springs School Concussion/Mild TBI Management Protocol

A concussion, or mild traumatic brain injury (TBI), occurs from an impact to the head or body, causing brain movement and possible injury to brain cells. Symptoms can appear days or weeks after injury. A coordinated approach involving school personnel, family, and medical professionals is crucial for recovery and return to activities. These guidelines apply to any student with a concussion, whether an athlete or not. These guidelines also apply to students suffering a concussion sustained outside of school activities.

Injury Protocol

- **If Injury Occurs at School or School Events:**
 - **Parent/Guardian Notification:** Immediate notification of the injury.
 - **Incident Report:** Completed by a school witness and filed in the Health Center.
 - **Activity Removal:** Student is removed from all physical activities (sports, PE, recess).
 - **Medical Referral:** Student and family are encouraged to seek medical evaluation.
 - **Follow-Up:** The School Health Coordinator will follow up with the family.

Post-Concussion Management

- **Diagnosis and Recovery Phases:** Recovery involves phased return to school, learning, and physical activity, which may take several weeks.
- **Documentation & Communication:** Parent/guardian must provide school staff with medical documentation, symptom updates, and guidance from healthcare providers.
- **Cognitive and Physical Rest:** Parent/guardian should monitor symptoms and support reduced activity. Current guidelines recommend reduced, not eliminated, physical and sensory activity.
- **Return to School/Learn:** Student may return when symptoms are manageable, generally 2-4 days post injury. No medical clearance is required to resume school, but parent/guardian must notify school personnel.

School and Medical Team Support

- **Academic Adjustments:** Teachers, Division Director, and Learning Specialist will coordinate gradual return-to-learn accommodations, based on symptom improvement.
- **Health Monitoring:** School health personnel will check in regularly and communicate with the family regarding symptoms.
- **Medical Oversight:** Health professionals will monitor and manage symptoms through recovery phases (return to school, learn, and play).

Return to Physical Activity

- **Graduated Return to Play:** Coaches will keep students out of sports to prevent Second Impact Syndrome until medical clearance is provided. Physical activities are resumed only after symptom improvement with a gradual return-to-play plan.
- **Medical Clearance:** A healthcare provider must clear the student for return to play, with ongoing assessment during the return-to-play process.

RESOURCES:

1. REAP Program adopted by the Colorado Dept of Educ
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/healthandwellness/braininjury>
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/healthandwellness/colorado-reap-2024-1>

2. CDC Heads Up Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/index.html>

CDC Concussion Fact Sheet (General, Parent Athlete-2pg)

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/Parent_Athlete_Info_Sheet-a.pdf

CDC Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents:

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/schools/TBI_factsheets_PARENTS-508-a.pdf

CDC Concussion Fact Sheet for Athletes:

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/factsheet_athletes_ages11-13-a.pdf

CDC Concussion Fact sheet for High School Coaches.

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion_fact_sheet_coaches.pdf

CDC Tip sheet for Teachers/Counselors/School Professionals:

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/schools/TBI_factsheet_TEACHERS-508-a.pdf

CDC Returning to School/Handout for School Professionals:

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/schools/TBI_Returning_to_School-a.pdf

CDC Heads Up Symptom Checklist for Concussion (School Health or Coach):

https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/schools/tbi_schools_checklist_508-a.pdf?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/schools/TBI_schools_checklist_508-a.pdf

Available Online Concussion Training:

- a) CDC Heads Up Website: Online Concussion Training:
<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/training/school-professionals.html>
- b) The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), required by CHSAA and for all CSS MS and US Coaches:
https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiA57G5BhDUARIsACgCYnyk6g8RzdypRslyOO9vnkK51O_NnEAgjwl33oV-sZt8hsQ-X7rsSN8aAj1XEALw_wcB
- c) CDC Online Training for High School Sports:
<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/training/index.html>