



INOVA SPORTS MEDICINE CONCUSSION PROGRAM

POST-CONCUSSION INFORMATION AND PLAN UNTIL MEETING WITH A CONCUSSION SPECIALIST

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

Concussion is a pathophysiological process that affects the brain following direct or indirect forces to the head. The disturbance of normal brain function is related to dysfunction of brain metabolism rather than a structural brain injury. This disturbance is typically associated with normal structural neuroimaging findings, which is one of the reasons CT scans are not always completed.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER CONCUSSION?

Concussion results in a constellation of physical, cognitive, emotional and sleep symptoms. Symptoms may be further exacerbated or provoked once you engage in cognitive-based activities or go to busy stimulating environments. Resolution of the symptoms typically follows a sequential course, but may be prolonged in select cases.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

PHYSICAL		COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL	SLEEP
Headache	Visual Problems	Feeling "foggy"	Irritability	Sleeping More
Nausea/Vomiting	Sensitivity to Light	Feeling slowed down	Anxious	Sleeping Less
Fatigue	Sensitivity to Noise	Difficulty Remembering	Feeling More Emotional	Drowsiness
Dizziness	Numbness/Tingling	Difficulty Concentrating	Sadness	Trouble Falling Asleep
Balance Problems			Nervousness	
			Rumination	

WHEN TO SEEK EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Persistent or Worsening Headache	Very drowsy, or cannot be awakened	Increasing confusion or irritability
Seizures/Loss of Consciousness (LOC)	Repeated Vomiting	Not recognizing familiar people/places
Neck pain	Strange or unusual behavior changes	Slurred speech
Weakness/numbness in extremities	Significant irritability	Less responsive than usual

HOME MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOLLOWING CONCUSSION

After the initial 24 hour period, limit over-the-counter medications to 2-3 doses per week. Until your appointment with our concussion specialists, you should avoid activities that could pose risk for head injury. However, prolonging rest and avoiding normal day-to-day activities can lead to the development of additional symptoms and therefore it is recommended that you **ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A REGULATED SCHEDULE**, as soon as possible:

DIET	Eating breakfast, lunch and dinner each day is important, even if three meals are not typically eaten.
HYDRATION	It is important to stay well hydrated.
SLEEP	Stick to a strict sleep schedule, with a regular bedtime and wake-up time. We recommend obtaining 7-9 hours each night, with limited naps of no more than 30 minutes.
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	It is beneficial to take walks and/or engage in light non-contact physical activities, following the injury. Once you are seen by our team of concussion specialists, additional recommendations will be discussed.
STRESS	Try to reduce additional stress, nervousness and anxiety by limiting focus on the injury and symptoms.

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE INOVA SPORTS MEDICINE CONCUSSION PROGRAM TO UNDERGO EVALUATION WITH OUR PHYSICIAN-BASED TEAM, SPECIALIZED IN CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT.

CONCUSSION HOTLINE: (703)970-6427

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