



---

### **Concussion Information Sheet**

(Adapted from Dr. Chris Paniak, Neuropsychologist)

#### **What is a Concussion?**

A concussion is a mild brain injury. If you were very confused or do not remember things that happened for a short time after your head injury, you probably had a concussion. If you do not remember anything that happened for more than a day after your injury, you may have had a more serious brain injury. The information that follows does not always apply to more serious injuries.

#### **What are Common Symptoms after a Concussion?**

You may feel dizzy, tired, confused, and have a headache soon after a concussion, but most people who have a concussion start to feel better within hours or days. At first, though, some problems are common. They may include tiredness, headaches, balance problems, trouble thinking clearly, and feeling forgetful. Some people feel many of these things. Others hardly notice any problems at all.

#### **What Can I Do to Cope?**

If you are having problems, you may need to rest for several days. Then slowly get back to your normal activities, as you feel able to do so. For example, start back to work or school part-time, to see how you cope. One of the most common problems after a concussion is tiredness. Tiredness can lead to headaches, thinking problems, and a short temper. Try to only do as much as you can without making your symptoms worse. Also, try not to be impatient with yourself or worry about your symptoms. Recovery can take a bit of time. Being impatient or worried will only make you feel worse. The problems mentioned above are common soon after a concussion. They do not mean that you are 'going crazy' or that you have a serious disease. Any problems almost always get better in the days and weeks after the injury. If they seem to be getting worse, you may be under too much stress or pushing yourself too hard.

#### **Is There Anything Else I Should Do?**

You should avoid alcohol and other drugs. They can make you feel worse. They can also lead to another injury, by affecting your coordination and judgement. You should also avoid things that may lead to another injury, like body-contact sports.

When all of your symptoms have gone away, you can probably do those things again. You may want to check with your doctor to be sure. On the other hand, you should not assume that problems you notice several months later are caused by the concussion. Almost everyone feels much better by about three months after a concussion. You need to remember that headaches, anxiety, tiredness, and thinking problems also occur in people who have never had a concussion. Feeling under stress is one common cause of such problems.

You should see your family doctor if you have any medical concerns, or other injuries. Feel free to ask him or her about any drug side-effects. These can sometimes make you feel worse. For example, some drugs for pain can make you tired and cause thinking problems. If you are suing someone because of your injury, try not to focus on the lawsuit. Let your lawyer handle it. Don't feel that you need to 'prove' that you are seriously injured. This may only make you feel worse. Get



---

some rest and then gradually get back into your regular routine. It is important to move forward with your life, and not to dwell on your concussion for too long.

**For more information you may want to visit the following websites.**

<http://www.aafp.org/afp/990901ap/990901e.html>

<http://www.bcsoccerweb.com/articles-reference/concussion-information-athletes.pdf>

[http://www.emedicinehealth.com/concussion/article\\_em.htm](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/concussion/article_em.htm)

<http://www.familydoctor.org/handouts/458.html>

If you have any questions, please call Dr. Pachet @ 403-232-1212.