

CJSA has adopted the US Soccer and US Youth Soccer recommendations regarding heading and the protocol for suspected concussions. **Compliance is mandatory for all CJSA members for all activities where CJSA insurance applies effective April 1, 2016 and strongly recommended to be applied immediately.**

This means that:

Heading Restrictions

Players who are 10 and younger

- No player who is 10 or younger may deliberately head the ball, regardless of the age group of the team they are playing on. This includes all activities where CJSA insurance applies, such as practices, scrimmages, and competitions at all levels.
- No player on a U11 team or a combined team including the U11 Age Group, (e.g. U11/12), even if the player has turned 11, may head the ball deliberately.

This restriction will be enforced in competitions for teams U11 and younger (including combined age brackets including U11 and younger) by award of an indirect free kick for the opposing team. Coaches and parents are responsible for applying this restriction for players who are 10 or younger and playing up.

Players who are 11-13.

- Players who are age 11 to 13 and on teams for age groups U12 and older, are restricted to up to 30 minutes of practice heading the ball per week. There is no restriction on the number of times these players can head the ball in a competition, unless the team is competing in a combined bracket that includes U11.

Concussion Protocol

Where a Health Care Professional (HCP) is Present at a Game or Practice

- Any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be evaluated on the sideline by an on-site HCP engaged in this capacity for the competition who will perform applicable testing.
- Any player suspected of suffering a concussion will not be allowed to return to play until he or she is cleared by the HCP. Coaches, parents/guardians or players may not overrule the HCP.
- If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter a game who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to return to play by the on-site HCP, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee may take other disciplinary measures against the coach as are permitted under the rules applicable to the competition.
- Unless an HCP determined that the player has not suffered a concussion and clears the player to return to play, the player will not be permitted to return to practice or play until the player has successfully completed the return to play protocol and has been cleared to return to play by a Physician.

Where a Health Care Professional Engaged for the Event is Not Present at a Game or Practice

- Where a HCP engaged for the event is not present at a game or practice, any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be removed from play and evaluated by an HCP before the player will be allowed to return to practice or play.
- No coach shall permit a player who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment to return to play until cleared to do so by an HCP.
- If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter a game who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to return to play by the on-site HCP, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee may take other disciplinary measures against the coach as are permitted under the rules applicable to the competition.
- Unless an HCP determined that the player has not suffered a concussion and clears the player to return to play, the player will not be permitted to return to practice or play until the player has successfully completed the return to play protocol and has been cleared to return to play by a Physician.

Definition of Health Care Professional

Health Care Professional (HCP) are licensed professionals such as an Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC) or Physician (MD/DO), with skills in emergency care, sports medicine injuries and experience related to concussion evaluation and management.

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