



## UTAH YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION CONCUSSION & TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY POLICY

Utah House Bill “The Protection of Athletes with Head Injuries Act” (UCA 36-12-13(2)), effective May 10, 2011, requires amateur sports organizations to adopt and enforce a concussion head injury policy. The policy will ensure the consistent and uniform implementation of a well-established concussion management program and return to play guidelines.

### Education

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A concussion is a brain injury and ALL brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally functions.

**All concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and even death if not recognized and managed properly.**

In other words, even a “ding” or a bump to the head can be serious. Concussion cannot be physically seen, and most occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms may appear immediately after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If an athlete reports any signs or symptoms of concussion, or observed expressing signs or symptoms of a concussion, seek medical attention immediately.

### Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

#### Signs

- *Appears dazed*
- *Vacant facial expression*
- *Moves clumsily or displays incoordination*
- *Answers questions slowly*
- *Slurred speech*
- *Seizures or convulsions*
- *Loss of consciousness*

#### Symptoms

- *Headaches*
- *“Pressure in head”*
- *Nausea or vomiting*
- *ringing in the ears*
- *Balance problems or dizziness*
- *Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision*
- *Sensitivity to light or noise*
- *Feeling sluggish or slowed down*
- *Feeling foggy or groggy*
- *Drowsiness*
- *Change in sleep patterns*
- *Amnesia*
- *“Don’t feel right”*
- *Fatigue or low energy*
- *Sadness*
- *Nervousness or anxiety*
- *Irritability*
- *More emotional or irritable*
- *Confusion*
- *Concentration or memory problems*
- *Repeating the same question/comment*

### **What to do if someone is suspected to have sustained a concussion:**

- Notify a coach, parent/legal guardian, responsible adult if it is suspected someone is experiencing signs or symptoms of a concussion. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head.
- If a concussion is suspected then an evaluation by a medical professional is required. A qualified health care provider can diagnose a concussion and advise when return to play is warranted.
- Rest! Players suffering from a concussion need time to allow the brain to heal properly. Young developing brains recovering from a current concussion are susceptible to sustaining a second concussion known as Second Impact Syndrome. This condition can cause permanent brain damage, or even death. It is important to rest until approval from a doctor or qualified health care provider is given before full return to activity.
- Do not take anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, or Motrin without the approval from a doctor. These medications thin the blood, and can possibly cause more damage to a brain that has sustained a concussion.

### **Possible consequences for returning a player to the field from a concussion too soon:**

- Athletes with the signs and symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. As quoted from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), "A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first- usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks) - can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussion can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death. This more serious condition is called second impact syndrome. Keep athletes with a known or suspected concussion from play until they have been evaluated and given permission to return to play by a qualified health care provider with experience in evaluating for concussion.

Remember: 'It's better to miss one game than the whole season.'"

## **Concussion Policy Action Plan**

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### **Utah Youth Soccer Associations and Clubs:**

- Utah Youth Soccer Association (UYSA) will be defined as:
  - UYSA paid and volunteer administrative staff.
  - All registered UYSA players.
  - UYSA affiliated clubs and its members.
  - UYSA affiliated independent teams.
  - UYSA affiliated recreation programs.

### **Education and Notification Requirements:**

- UYSA shall adopt these education and notification policies for the management of concussions in youth soccer.
  - They shall ensure that all coaches (paid and volunteer) are educated in the nature and risk of concussions prior to the first practice/competition. This education shall include signs and symptoms of concussions.

- They shall annually require all players and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of those players to sign and return an informed consent form relating to the nature and risk of concussions. This shall include the review of the UYSA Concussion Policy which includes the signs and symptoms of concussions, and the UYSA Concussion Clearance Form.
- The UYSA Concussion Policy and UYSA Concussion Clearance Form can be found on the UYSA website under Risk Management heading, or TOSH Concussion Information.

### **Action Plan for Head Injuries:**

- UYSA shall adopt and act upon these policies for the management of concussions in youth soccer.
  - UYSA shall ensure that any player showing signs or symptoms of a concussion is immediately removed from participation/competition.
  - All UYSA players sustaining or suspected of sustaining a traumatic brain injury **MUST** use the UYSA Concussion Clearance Form in order to return to play.
  - UYSA will not allow athletes to return to play until they have a signed copy of the UYSA Concussion Clearance Form from a Qualified Health Care Provider.
    - A Qualified Health Care Provider is someone who meets the following requirements:
      - Licensed in the state of Utah under the Division of Occupational and Professional **Licensing Act**
      - May evaluate and manage a concussion within the health care provider's scope of practice
      - Successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of a concussion within 3 years.

### **Appropriate Clearance of Head Injuries:**

- UYSA will follow the information below for the management of concussions in youth soccer.
  - The Qualified Health Care Provider who has cleared the athlete must provide the Utah Youth Soccer Club with a statement that they are trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
  - Optimally, all athletes should progress through the "Return To Play Protocol" (R.T.P.P) on the UYSA Concussion Clearance Form before returning to play, but athletes may return to play without completing the protocol if indicated on the UYSA Concussion Clearance Form by a Qualified Health Care Provider.
  - The UYSA Concussion Clearance Form must be returned to the appropriate administration before final clearance is granted.
    - The Appropriate Administration is the person(s) responsible for the clearance information depending on the event in which they were injured.
      - UYSA Administrative Staff is administratively responsible for the clearances of head injuries that occur during a UYSA hosted event. A UYSA hosted event is defined as:
        1. Spring State Cup Tournament

2. Fall State Cup Tournament
  3. Presidents Cup Tournament
  4. All State Select/ODP Events
  5. US Youth Soccer Region IV and National Events
- Club, Independent and Recreational teams are administratively responsible for the clearance of head injuries that occur during a UYSA non-hosted event. A UYSA non-hosted event is defined as none of the events listed above as a UYSA hosted event, and may include the proceeding events listed, but are not limited to the proceeding events:
    1. Regular season play
    2. Practices, scrimmages, tryouts, and camps
    3. Club hosted events and tournaments

- **Coaches Requirements:**

- Shall be educated as to the nature and risk of concussions including continuing to play after a concussion or head injury. This education shall include signs and symptoms of concussions. Education materials are available below at no charge.
- Shall educate their athletes on the signs and symptoms of concussions and encourage athletes to notify a coach if they or a teammate exhibits those signs or symptoms.
- Shall immediately remove any athlete from participation/competition who is suspected of sustaining a concussion.
- Shall not allow an athlete who has been removed from play because of a suspected concussion to return to play until the athlete has received written clearance from a Qualified Health Care Professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

- **Parents/Legal Guardian Requirements:**

- Shall annually review, sign, and return the informed consent form to the appropriate administrative source outline above Utah Youth Soccer Club in which their child plays for before participating in any practice or competition. Their signature acknowledging that they have read, understands, and agrees to abide by the UYSA Concussion Policy and UYSA Concussion Clearance Form.

- **Athlete Requirements:**

- Shall annually review, sign and return to the Utah Youth Soccer Club in which they play for, an informed consent form on concussion prior to initiating practice or competition.
- Shall inform a coach or parent if they, or a teammate, exhibit any signs or symptoms of a concussion.

- The athlete may not return to play until evaluated and received written cleared to resume participation by a qualified health care provider who is trained in the evaluation and management of a concussion within the health care provider's scope of practice.

\*For questions about the UYSA Concussion Policy, or for printed copies of the policy:

**Call:** 801-268-3365, or **Email:** [battridge@utahyouthsoccer.net](mailto:battridge@utahyouthsoccer.net)

\*For more information regarding sports related concussions please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at:

[www.cdc.gov/concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion)