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Concussions in sports answers

Concussions are a surprisingly common occurrence in sports. High school athletes suffer thousands of concussions each year, mostly in football, ice hockey and football. Concussions do not always involve being knocked out or a loss of consciousness. A concussion occurs when a child's mental status changes as a result of trauma (usually a blow to the head). A child who shows signs of mental confusion or is dinged by a blow to the head has suffered a concussion. What happens after a sports-related concussion? Sports-related concussions often result in mental and physical symptoms (e.g. inability to concentrate, forgetfulness, headache, fatigue, dizziness). For many athletes, the symptoms disappear after about 10 days, and they typically do not last more than several months. In some cases though, concussions lead to persistent complaints of physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral symptoms, sometimes referred to as post-concussion syndrome. We don't know if persistent post-concussive symptoms are primarily due to medical or psychological reasons. In rare cases, when repeated concussions occur over a short interval, athletes may suffer from other impact syndrome, a pathological response in the brain that can be life-threatening if not treated quickly. Parents should seek careful evaluation and management of any sports-related concussion. How should a sports-related concussion be assessed? Concussions are typically handled according to the severity. Immediately after a concussion, medical evaluation is needed to determine a child's vital signs, level of consciousness, and to rule out other injuries, such as those to the spine. The latest guidelines show that any child who loses consciousness as a result of trauma during a sporting event should be evaluated by a hospital emergency department immediately. In the case of less severe concussion, athletes are typically evaluated on site rather than in hospital emergency rooms. There are a number of approaches to sideline concussion assessment. There are also guidelines that can help determine when a child is ready to return to play after a concussion. Can neuropsychological assessment help? Neuropsychological assessment is widely recognized as the most sensitive way to detect disturbances in brain function associated with concussion. The National Football League and the National Hockey League have both introduced systematic programs for neuropsychological testing, which has many colleges. Athletes administered short tests of attention, memory, and the speed of information processing before the season. Athletes who sustain concussions are tested again, typically within 48 hours of the injury and periodically afterwards. Recovery to baseline levels of performance is typically required before athletes are allowed to return to play. Similar cooperative programs can be introduced for organized athletic programs at high school. In the absence of testing, athletes who complain of persistent post-concussive symptoms should be considered for a more comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation. What can be done to prevent or treat concussions? Changes in the rules of athletic competition have reduced the number of sports-related concussions. After the National Collegiate Athletic Association made use of the head while tackling illegally in 1976, the annual number of head and neck injuries in football fell by about 50%. The necessary use of helmets in many contact sports, as well as advances in helmet design, has also resulted in fewer head injuries. Improved conditioning of young athletes, especially strengthening neck muscles, can also help prevent concussions. If a child sustains a concussion, parents should seek appropriate medical attention. They should request a description of symptoms that suggest worsening of brain damage and common post-concussive symptoms, as well as guidelines for return to play and for medical follow-up. For athletes who experience persistent difficulties after a concussion such as headache, difficulty concentrating, irritability, sleep disturbances, or dropping grades, an effective treatment plan will often combine training, cognitive rehabilitation, psychological support, and in some cases medications. Contact your primary care physician for more serious injuries that do not respond to basic first aid. As an additional resource, staff at Nationwide Children's Hospital Sports Medicine are available to diagnose and treat sports-related injuries in adolescents, adolescents and collegiate athletes. Services are available in several locations throughout central Ohio. To make an appointment, call (614) 355-6000 or request an appointment online. 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NFHS has teamed up with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to educate coaches, officials, parents and students about the importance of proper concussion recognition and leadership in high school sports. This course highlights the impact of sports-related concussions on athletes, learns to recognize a suspected concussion, and provides protocols to deal with a suspected concussion with steps to help players return to play safely after a concussion. Each state's concussion management requirements are included as part of the course. A Spanish track is also available for this course. The NFHS Coach Certification Program is a national professional credential offered to individuals currently coaching strive to coach at interscholastic level. Level 1 National Certification Level 2 Basic National Certification and first aid, the health and safety of coaches, coaches provide content from all eight domains contained in the National Standards of Sports Coaches (NASPE 2006). These two courses form the foundation from which all electives and sports-specific courses are developed. Core courses should be completed first to give the coach a better understanding of electives and sport-specific courses. The Parent Seat Fundamentals of Coaching Coaching

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