



SARNIA FC CONCUSSION RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a neurologic injury which causes a temporary disturbance in brain cells that comes from and is the result of an extreme acceleration or deceleration of the brain within the skull. The common misconception is that you must be hit in the head to cause a concussion injury – this is not true! Because a concussion is the result of acceleration or deceleration of the brain, a concussion can happen with a significant blow to anywhere on the body, provided sufficient acceleration/deceleration is transmitted to the brain tissue, head or face, there may be no other visible signs of a brain injury. It can cause changes in the brain that may not be seen in a CT scan or X-Ray. Balance, reaction time and cognitive skills can also be impacted.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Symptoms of a concussion range from mild to severe and can last for or appear within hours, days, weeks, or even months. In some cases, there may be no symptoms at all. If you suspect a concussion, or notice any of the symptoms listed below, contact your doctor immediately. In severe cases, proceed to an Urgent Care Centre or Emergency Room immediately.

Visible Symptoms

Loss of consciousness or responsiveness	Loss of motion / slow to rise
Unsteady on feet / balance issues	Grabbing / clutching head
Dazed, vacant or blank look	Vomiting
Disoriented	Bleeding from nose / ears
Sensitivity to light	Unequal pupils (eye)
Seizures or convulsions	Deteriorating conscious state

Non-Visible Symptoms

Confusion / disorientation	Complaints of pain / headache
Complaints of dizziness / nausea	Complaints of fuzzy / blurred vision
Inability to concentrate	Easily upset / angered (emotional)
Nervous / anxious Tired / sleeping more or less than usual	Complaints of tingling / burning feeling in arms & legs
Trouble falling asleep	Memory loss – unable to remember events leading up to incident



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Sarnia FC Emergency Protocol – Suspected Player Concussion

A player showing any signs/symptoms as listed on the Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool or as listed in this document **must** be removed from play immediately. All Coaches/Trainers are required to be familiar with the use of this tool and follow the Club's protocol without question. The player is not to re-enter the game or practice.

- In the event of a loss of consciousness call 911 for assistance immediately. Do not move the player unless absolutely necessary for safety reasons.
- Ensure that a member of the team staff stays with the player.
- Notify any family members immediately if they are present.
- The player must be evaluated by a physician prior to returning to play. Documentation from the physician is required. Average recovery period is 10 -14 days, but can sometimes be longer.
- Graduated "Return to Play process" as per Zurich Concussion guidelines (2012).
- Coaches must complete required injury report and submit to Sarnia FC within 24 hours of the incident.

Sarnia FC Return to Play Stages Protocol

This is a multi-part process that requires supervision from the player's health care provider at each stage.

1. Limited activity	Physical and cognitive rest
2. Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming, cycling
3. Sport specific exercise	Light running skills, no heading
4. Non-contact training drills	Passing / movement
5. Full contact practice	Normal training cycle
6. Return to play	Normal game play
*A minimum of 24 hrs is required between each stage.	

Any recurrence of symptoms requires the player to return to the previous level. Sarnia FC Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Managers and Trainers are not authorized to oversee Return to Play processes.

Base Line Testing

Many soccer clubs recommend that players involved in competitive programs undergo Base Line Testing prior to the beginning of the outdoor season. This should be done in a controlled environment under the supervision of an approved concussion testing facility.

Caution

Sarnia FC is committed to providing a safe environment for all players regardless of age and gender. It is, however, ultimately the responsibility of the parent to ensure that appropriate professional care is provided to players under the age of 18 in the event of injury. In the event of a concussion diagnosis, premature return to play can result in serious and sometimes permanent injury, particularly in the event of a second impact. Parents should seek ongoing medical evaluation for the benefit of the player's long-term health and safety.