BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONCUSSION & HEAD INJURY INFORMATION RELEASE FORM
2019-20

This form must be signed by all student athletes and parent/guardians before the student participates in any athletic or spirit practice or contest each school year.

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 disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions symptoms resolve quickly, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

**Symptoms may include one or more of the following:**

- Headaches
- “Pressure in head”
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- 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
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)
- Repeating the same question/comment

**Signs observed by teammates, parents, and coaches include:**

- Appears dazed
- Vacant facial expression
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily or displays incoordination
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit
- Can’t recall events after hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Loses consciousness

*Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference in Sport*

**What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?**

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one (second impact syndrome). This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete’s safety.
If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after sustaining a concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without written medical clearance from a Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO). Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. You should also inform your child’s coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it is better to miss one game than miss the whole season. **When in doubt, the athlete sits out!**

Cognitive Rest & Return to Learn

The first step to concussion recovery is cognitive rest. This is essential for the brain to heal. Activities that require concentration and attention such as trying to meet academic requirements, the use of electronic devices (computers, tablets, video games, texting, etc.), and exposure to loud noises may worsen symptoms and delay recovery. Students may need their academic workload modified while they are initially recovering from a concussion. Decreasing stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time. This may involve staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened school schedule, gradually increasing to normal. Any academic modifications should be coordinated jointly between the student’s medical providers and school personnel. No consideration should be given to returning to physical activity until the student is fully integrated back into the classroom setting and is symptom free. Rarely, a student will be diagnosed with post-concussive syndrome and have symptoms that last weeks to months. In these cases, a student may be recommended to start a non-contact physical activity regimen, but this will only be done under the direct supervision of a healthcare provider.

Blue Valley School District Concussion Procedures

Return to Practice and Competition

The Kansas School Sports Head Injury Prevention Act provides that if an athlete suffers, or is suspected of having suffered, a concussion or head injury during a competition or practice, the athlete must be immediately removed from the competition or practice and cannot return to practice or competition until a Health Care Professional has evaluated the athlete and provided a written authorization to return to practice and competition. The KSHSAA recommends that an athlete not return to practice or competition the same day the athlete suffers or is suspected of suffering a concussion. The KSHSAA also recommends that an athlete’s return to practice and competition should follow a graduated protocol under the supervision of the health care provider (MD or DO).

Based on the Kansas School Sports Head Injury Prevention Act and guidance from the Center for Disease Control, NFHS and the KSHSAA; all Blue Valley Student-Athletes who have been diagnosed with a concussion or referred to a physician for a suspected concussion due to his/her assessment by either a member of the coaching staff, school nurse, or Athletic Trainer, must adhere to the following protocol to ensure a safe return to participation.

1. EVERY student sent to a physician suspecting a concussion will complete a 5-step return to play (RTP) progression (see below), Each step must be separated by 24 asymptomatic hours.

2. Student-athletes diagnosed with a concussion will not begin their RTP until they are off all academic accommodations.

3. When a student-athlete is completely asymptomatic AND they are cleared by a MD/DO, they can begin their RTP progression (provided they are off all academic accommodations),

4. RTP progressions at the high schools will be directed by the school’s Athletic Trainer. At the middle school, these protocols will be directed by a member of the coaching staff (or the principal’s designee) in direct communication with the athletic trainer at their feeder high school.

5. Certain physicians may require a student-athlete to return to them after Step 4 of the RTP protocol for an additional exam. In this case, the student athlete will not be able to participate in competition without a written release by the physician with language similar to the following, “The student-athlete can now participate in competition without restrictions.”
Once again, all student athletes diagnosed with a concussion or removed from participation because they are suspected of sustaining a concussion, must undergo the 5-step return to participation protocols once they have been cleared by the physician (even when the physician clears them for full participation).

Please understand, the RTP is a 5-step process, so the earliest your student-athlete can hope to return to participation is the 5th day after he/she has been released to start the RTP. Should the Athletic Trainer not deem successful completion of each step of the RTP, participation will be delayed accordingly. The following is the 5-step RTP Protocol that the Blue Valley School District will follow for all student-athletes who have been diagnosed with a concussion or have been removed from participation due to a suspected concussion.

**Step 1:** Light aerobic exercise- 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike or light jog; no weight lifting, resistance training, or any other exercises.

**Step 2:** Moderate aerobic exercise- 30 minutes of running at moderate intensity in the gym or on the field without a helmet or other equipment.

**Step 3:** Non-contact training drills in full uniform. May begin weight lifting, resistance training, and other exercises.

**Step 4:** Full contact practice or training.

**Step 5:** Full game play.

If symptoms of a concussion re-occur, or if concussion signs and/or behaviors are observed at any time during the return to activity program, the athlete must discontinue all activity and be re-evaluated by their health care provider.

**Important Health Care Provider Information**

Both Kansas state law and the BVSD policy on concussion management, beginning with the RTP, and return to full participation **MUST BE IN WRITING AND APPROVED BY A MD/DO.** Any other health care professional **CANNOT** legally approve the return to play.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:
https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html
http://www.kansasconcussion.org/

For concussion information and educational resources collected by the KSHSAA, go to:
http://www.kshsaa.org/Public/General/ConcussionGuidelines.cfm

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KANSAS STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE KANSAS SCHOOL SPORTS HEAD INJURY PREVENTION ACT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION SPORTS PLAYING RULES RELATED TO CONCUSSIONS

The following language appears in all National Federation sports’ rules books:

“Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.”

The Kansas Legislature has enacted the School Sports Head Injury Prevention Act (hereinafter the “Kansas Act”) effective July 1, 2011:

Sec. 72-135. (a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the school sports head injury prevention act. (b) As used in this section:

(1) “School” means any public or accredited private high school, middle school or junior high school.

(2) “Health care provider” means a person licensed by the state board of healing arts to practice medicine and surgery.

(c) The state board of education, in cooperation with the Kansas state high school activities association, shall compile information on the nature and risk of concussion and head injury including the dangers and risks associated with the continuation of playing or practicing after a person suffers a concussion or head injury. Such information shall be provided to school districts for distribution to coaches, school athletes and the parents or guardians of school athletes.

(d) A school athlete may not participate in any sport competition or practice session unless such athlete and the athlete’s parent or guardian have signed, and returned to the school, a concussion and head injury information release form. A release form shall be signed and returned each school year that a student athlete participates in sport competitions or practice sessions.

(e) If a school athlete suffers, or is suspected of having suffered, concussion or head injury during a sport competition or practice session, such school athlete immediately shall be removed from the sport competition or practice session.

(f) Any school athlete who has been removed from a sport competition or practice session shall not return to competition or practice until the athlete is evaluated by a health care provider and the health care provider provides such athlete a written clearance to return to play or practice. If the healthcare provider who provides the clearance to return to play or practice is not an employee of the school district, such health care provider shall not be liable for civil damages resulting from any act or omission in the rendering of such care, other than acts or omissions constituting gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.

(g) This section shall take effect on and after July 1, 2011.

Revised 04/16