



Concussion Management Protocol

Sturgeon Public School Division

The following document was developed by the working group from Sturgeon Public School Division and the University of Alberta.

Working Group:

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References:

The preparation of the Concussion Management Protocol involved the collaborative efforts in conjunction with the following documents:

1. Consensus statement on Concussion in Sport—the 5th International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Berlin, October 2016
2. Concussion Recognition Tool
3. Concussion Management: Return to Play Guidelines (Alberta Concussion Alliance)
4. Concussion Management: Return to Learn Guidelines (Alberta Concussion Alliance)
5. Model Concussion Policy (Alberta Concussion Alliance)
5. Learning Accommodations for Students Following Concussion (BC Research Injury Prevention Unit)



Concussion Protocol

1.1 Introduction:

This document is designed to provide guidance to organizations responsible for operating, regulating or planning sport and sporting events with a risk of concussion to participants. It also supports the development, establishment and implementation of policies, procedures and programs for the prevention, treatment, and education of sport-related concussions and head injuries.

1.2 Concussion Protocol:

Sturgeon Public School Division is committed to maintaining the health of the community and believes that participating in the activities organized by Sturgeon Public School Division can lead to better health. Our activities, as do most physical activities, have an inherent risk of concussion. Sturgeon Public School Division recognizes that concussions are a significant public health issue because of their potential short- and long-term consequences. Sturgeon Public School Division therefore enacts this protocol as a tool to help prevent, recognize and properly treat concussions which may occur in our activities.

Sturgeon Public School Division will endeavour to have all participants follow all treatment protocols, return to learn/work protocols and return to play protocols.

The proper treatment of a concussion is more important than participation in any sport/activity/work/school during the healing process.

1.3 Definitions in this Protocol:

(a) The definition of concussion is taken from the 2016 Berlin consensus statement on concussion in sport: Concussion is a brain injury and is defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by biomechanical forces.

A concussion:

- is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g. headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);
- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness); and,
- cannot normally be seen on x-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs.

(b) Suspected Concussion means the recognition that an individual appears to have either experienced an injury or impact that may result in a concussion, or is exhibiting unusual behaviour that may be the result of concussion.

(c) Concussion Diagnosis means a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. It is critical that an individual with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

1.4 Stages of Concussion Management

(a) Education

The Sturgeon Public School Division Concussion Flow Chart outlines the process for having players evaluated and return to school/play activities. Sturgeon Public School Division will see that every player, parent and coach receives concussion education on topics including:

- Concussion Recognition Tool
- Concussion Protocol Flow Chart
- Return to Learn document
- Return to Play document
- Learning Accommodations

(b) Prevention: Ensuring Safe Play - Concussion Prevention Strategies

Sturgeon Public School Division requires that all activity within its purview follow the rules of the game and that the rules will be consistently enforced in order to effectively ensure safe play.

(c) Identification – Using the Concussion Management Protocol (CMP)

Sturgeon Public School Division requires that the Concussion Management Protocol be available and implemented at all activities and events in case of a concussion or suspected concussion. Please see the Sturgeon Public School Division Concussion Flow Chart for details of the process

A Concussion Management Protocol (CMP) will allow proper care for athletes when a suspected concussion occurs. The CMP will provide appropriate direction to all individuals.

(d) Documentation of Incident:

Sturgeon Public School Division will use the Division Incident Form (pink form) to record the details of the incident. There are several times throughout the duration of the concussion at which would require information that needs to be documented:

- A. Time of injury- record and monitor all signs and symptoms for 48 hours following the injury. (Note if signs get worse, or if any of the “red flag” symptoms show, follow the emergency protocol).
- B. During recovery- record how much school/work/sport time has been missed. This is valuable for the athlete if they ever sustain another concussion.
- C. Return to play- documentation needs to occur if the athlete has clearance from a medical doctor before returning to game play. There should be documentation from the athlete that states he/she has successfully returned to school/work full time without reoccurring symptoms, as well as successfully exercised to exhaustion without reoccurring symptoms.

(e) Return to Learn [SEE RETURN TO LEARN PROTOCOL] This stepwise program starts with cognitive and physical rest. Follow each step through to completion. If symptoms are severe at any step, stop and wait until the symptoms resolve and continue as tolerated. Physical activity during Return to Learn is restricted to walking as tolerated. If a parent/guardian wishes to have his/her child cleared sooner, they require a note from a physician stating their child is cleared for learning and play participation.

(f) Return to Play [SEE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL]

Return to Learn/Work must be fully completed. The athlete must be in a full time school environment with doing minimal physical activity. Athletes can then begin step 2 of Return to Play. Ensure that after completing a step, wait 24 hours before moving to the next step. If symptoms worsen during physical activity, wait 24 hours after symptoms have subsided and when returning, start at the step previous. This should be medically guided.

1.7 Stages of Concussion Management and Associated Documents

Education

- Concussion Recognition Tool
- International Consensus Statement www.coachesontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/Berlin_Consensus_2017.pdf
- Parachute Canada www.parachutecanada.org

Identification

- Concussion Recognition Tool

Management Procedures for a Diagnosed Concussion

- Return to Learn Protocol
- Return to Play Protocol
- Concussion Protocol Flow Chart