

<b>Number:</b>	<i>To be determined</i>
<b>Topic:</b>	Concussion Protocol
<b>Effective:</b>	February, 2009
<b>Cross-Reference:</b>	Halton Elementary & Secondary Physical Education Safety Guidelines – Curricular/ Intramural/ Inter-school Modules HDSB Concussion Handbook
<b>Review/Revision Date:</b>	As Required
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Superintendent of Education.....

**INTENDED PURPOSE:**

The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines (2008), to which the Halton District School Board subscribes, describe the ‘mandatory minimum safety standards’ for Curricular, Intramural and Interschool activities. The 2008 Revised Guidelines state, ‘*Safety precautions and protocols must be developed and communicated to participants in response to potential CONCUSSION risk factors.*’

The Halton District School Board is committed to the safety of all students while participating in physical activities and athletic competitions as part of an Halton District School Board co-instructional program. In the interests of safety,

the following protocol must be followed when a student is suspected of having sustained a concussion.

The Concussion Protocol is intended to assist the administrator, teacher, intramural supervisor, and coach in:

- understanding concussion, its causes, the symptoms and signs;
- minimizing the occurrence of a concussion from happening through teacher, intramural supervisor, and coach implementation of instructional strategies including providing students/athletes with information on the risks of a concussion and how to minimize those risks.;
- assessing a suspected concussion at the activity/practice/game site;
- responding to a suspected concussion appropriately;
- informing parents of the suspected concussed child and providing resources;
- applying the proper steps in the recovery process before the student/athlete resumes full participation.

**PROCEDURES:****Concussion Information:****i. Definition of a concussion**

A concussion is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain cells function, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g. headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g. memory problems, decreased concentration), or emotional (e.g. feeling depressed). A concussion is the most difficult sports’ injury to diagnose. Brain scans cannot determine if a concussion exists. However, ignoring a potential concussion has grave risks.

**ii. Causes of a concussion**

- a blow to the head, face or neck.
- major physical trauma to other parts of the body (e.g. sideways check to the body) that causes a whiplash effect on the head and neck.

**iv. Risks:**

**a. Post Concussion Syndrome:**

Without early detection, a medical examination, rest and appropriate recovery steps an initial concussion may lead to chronic cognitive and neurobehavioural difficulties which in some cases can be permanent and disabling:

**b. Second Impact Syndrome:**

**Second Impact Syndrome occurs when a person has two concussions in relatively short period of time.** Student/athletes who are not fully recovered from an initial concussion and

suffer a second blow to the head are significantly vulnerable for recurrent, cumulative and even catastrophic consequences of a second concussive injury e.g., prolonged coma or even death.

*(For more information refer to the Halton District School Board Concussion Handbook)*

**The administrator, teacher, intramural supervisor, coach(with the support of the HDSB Concussion Handbook) will:**

- recognize the common symptoms and signs of a concussion, including symptoms of Post Concussion Syndrome;
- understand the consequences of Second Impact Syndrome
- develop teaching/coaching strategies which will minimize the risk of concussion;
- introduce information and strategies to students/athletes to minimize the risk of concussion;
- be prepared to assess a suspected concussion;
- be able to respond to a suspected concussion by following a series of prescribed steps.

**Communication and Assessment**

The student/athlete needs to be evaluated by a medical doctor. The administrator, teacher/intramural supervisor/coach must inform the parents/guardians that:

- their child/ward has a suspected concussion.
- the return to physical activity/sport can only occur after clearance by a **medical physician**.
- The form, “Request to Resume Athletic Participation – Concussion Related Injuries” must be completed for Interschool sports.
- The form, “Request to Resume Physical Activity – Concussion Related Injuries” must be completed for Curricular and Intramural/Club activities.

**Process for when and how a student/athlete with a concussion may return to physical activity/competition:**

**NO CONCUSSION** as determined by a medical doctor:

Only when the student/athlete provides written permission (e.g. the form – “Request to Resume Athletic Participation: Concussion Related Injuries” for Interschool Sports – “Request to Resume Physical Activity: Concussion Related Injuries” for Curricular and Intramural activities) signed by the doctor, and given to the administrator, teacher/intramural supervisor/coach, can the student/athlete return to activity, practice, competition.

**CONCUSSION** as determined by a medical doctor:

- a) Student/athlete is diagnosed with a concussion by a doctor. (Dr. Appointment #1)  
Doctor provides written information to the school (administrator, teacher/administrator/coach) that the student/athlete has a concussion.

**Step 1** No activity/complete rest until symptoms and signs are gone.

- b) Doctor assesses student/athlete and finds no symptoms or signs. (Dr. Appointment #2). Doctor provides written information to the school (administrator, teacher/coach) that the student/athlete can participate in the following non contact activities:

**Step 2** – Light exercise such as walking or stationary cycling, for 10-15 minutes.

**Step 3** – Other activities such as running, skating for 20-30 min.

**Step 4**– Skills sessions e.g. ball drills, volleying drills, and other activities with no contact to the head e.g. heading the ball in soccer

**Note:** Each step must take a minimum of one day. If symptoms or signs of the concussion return (e.g. headache, feeling nauseated) either with the activity or later that day, the student/athlete needs to rest for 24 hours, be re evaluated by a physician, and return to the previous step.

- c) Doctor assesses student and finds no symptoms or signs. (Dr. Appointment #3). Doctor provides written information to the school (administrator /teacher//coach) that the student/athlete can return to:

**Step 5** - Regular physical activity/intramural/club activities/team sports.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Refer to *the Halton District School Board Physical Education Curricular, Intramural and Interschool Concussion Protocol Handbook for Administrators, teachers, Intramural supervisors, and coaches* for detailed information on signs and symptoms of a concussion, process steps in returning to physical activity/ athletic competition, and relevant Return to Participation permission forms