

## Concussion Guidance:

### **When to Seek Emergent Care:**

#### Dangerous Signs & Symptoms of a Concussion

(English Source: [CDC HEADS UP](#); Spanish Source: [CDC HEADS UP](#))

- The pupil (black circle in the eye) is bigger in one eye compared to the other eye
- Very sleepy
- Not able to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech
- Feeling weak or numb in parts of the body
- Not as coordinated as usual
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Convulsions or seizures (look likes shaking or twitching)
- Acting differently, inconsolable
- Confused
- Restlessness or irritated, or not able to get settled
- Loss of consciousness (passes out) - Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously
- Refusal to eat or drink

### **Headaches:**

Headaches are common after a concussion. Below are ways to help with headache pain:

- Get enough sleep
  - Turn down lights and sounds at bedtime
  - Turn off TV and other screens 15-30 minutes before bedtime
  - Turn off cellphone before bed
  - Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
  - Try not to nap during the day
  - For more information: *Sleep Tips and Strategies for Older Children and Teens*
- Eat healthy meals
- Stay hydrated
- Lower stress during concussion recovery
  - Let go of or do not think about things that make you:
    - worry
    - feel overwhelmed
    - “stress you out”
  - Try hypnosis at [ImaginAction.Stanford.Edu](#) or other guided meditations apps
  - Consider seeking counseling if you have more emotional difficulties or symptoms after concussion

You doctor may suggest medicines such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or naproxen to help with headache pain.

- Discuss frequency with your provider
- Taking them too often can cause more headaches.

**Activity:**

- Rest for the first 1-3 days after a concussion
- After the first 1-3 days, low level non-contact physical activity is generally safe and may be helpful
  - Lessen the intensity of your physical activity if symptoms worsen
  - Start with walking and body weight exercises for 15-20 minutes
- No off-the-ground activities (e.g., playground equipment, biking) until cleared by your regular provider
- Do not play sports until your regular provider says that it is safe to do so
- Your regular provider may recommend a specific way to return to physical activity based on your symptoms
- Do not drive until your regular provider says that you can drive again

**School: See separate handout**