



CONCUSSION KIT



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The Parachute Smart Hockey program is designed to keep hockey players safe and prevent brain injuries on the ice. This kit has been created as a tool to guide you through important concussion information, help you integrate concussion tools and resources within your hockey team and support your hockey community to prevent, recognize and manage concussions.

Safety in hockey is a shared responsibility. Make concussion education a priority this season and encourage your team to play Smart Hockey.

Parachute's Smart Hockey Concussion Kit

- Provides educational guides for coaches/trainers, hockey players and parents/guardians to help prevent, recognize and manage concussion.
- Assists coaches with incorporating concussion education into their pre-season meetings.
- Ensures hockey teams have the resources available for recognizing and responding to concussion (e.g., Concussion Recognition Tool).
- Educates players and parents on how to manage concussion and return to hockey safely, using resources such as the Return-to-Sport Strategy and Personal Concussion Record for Players.
- Offers tools to help create a concussion-safe environment for hockey players.
- Promotes player safety and encourages everyone to play Smart Hockey.

In partnership with Coaching Association of Canada, Parachute's Smart Hockey Concussion Kit is a great resource for coaches, players and families to provide information on how to prevent concussion and keep our players safe so they can enjoy playing hockey for life. The Smart Hockey Concussion Kit complements the existing concussion programming of Hockey Canada.

Parachute is Canada's national charity dedicated to injury prevention. Our mission is to create a safer Canada by preventing serious and fatal injuries through evidence-based solutions that advocate and educate. Our vision: a Canada free of serious injuries, with people in Canada living long lives to the fullest.

For more information, visit parachute.ca

The resources included in this kit were developed based on the Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport.



Coaching Association of Canada
Association canadienne des entraîneurs



Smart Hockey Concussion Kit Resources

Pre-season resources

Pre-Season Concussion Education Team Meeting Guide

Use this guide to host an educational team meeting with players and their families at the beginning of the hockey season and at any time throughout the year.

Pre-Season Concussion Education Checklist

Follow the step-by-step checklist to ensure your team is knowledgeable on preventing, recognizing and managing concussion.

Pre-Season Concussion Education Sheet

This sheet provides you with concise information to guide the content of your pre-season concussion education meeting.

On-Ice Tips to Assist in Preventing Concussion & Other Injuries in Hockey

Give these tips to your players to show them how to keep themselves and others safe.

Forms

Concussion Code of Conduct Card for Coaches, Trainers & Safety Personnel

These Code of Conduct cards reinforce behaviours that demonstrate respect for the game and respect for others. Committing to the Code of Conduct at the start of the season reminds everyone of their role in playing Smart Hockey.

Medical Assessment Letter

Keep on hand to give to parents to bring to the doctor if their child has a concussion, in case the doctor is not fully trained in concussion management.

Concussion resources

Concussion Guide for Coaches, Trainers & Safety Personnel

This handout helps coaches, trainers & safety personnel recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion, whether the player was injured on the ice, at home or at school. It helps coaches understand the steps required to return a player to hockey safely.

Return-to-Sport Strategy

Keep this on hand for your own reference and to provide to players and their families when any player on the team is dealing with a concussion. Discuss this step-wise process in your pre-season team meetings with players and parents.

Action Plan

To make sure concussions are managed properly on your team, put an action plan in place that coaches, trainers, players and their parents/caregivers are all involved in.

Media

Social Media Guide

Use this social media guide to help your team/league use social media to support and promote Parachute Smart Hockey. Use the sample messaging to show everyone how your team plays Smart Hockey!

Smart Hockey Pledge: We Play Smart Hockey Sign

Encourage your team and all those involved with the team to publicly take a Smart Hockey pledge by posing with the "We Play Smart Hockey" sign. With permission, post this picture to your team and/or league's website and social media channels using the hashtag **#PlaySmartHockey**.



Handouts

For players

12 On-Ice Tips to Assist in Preventing Concussion & Other Injuries in Hockey

Follow these 12 on-ice tips to ensure you stay safe and always play Smart Hockey.

Concussion Guide for Players

This handout provides hockey players with information on the signs and symptoms of a concussion so they can better understand and recognize concussion symptoms on and off the ice. This guide also helps players know what to do if they notice concussion symptoms in themselves or their teammates.

Concussion Code of Conduct Card for Players

These Code of Conduct cards reinforce behaviours that demonstrate respect for the game and respect for others. Committing to the Code of Conduct at the start of the season reminds everyone of their role in playing Smart Hockey.

Personal Concussion Record for Players

Provide this form to players and their families to record any diagnosed concussions and concussion symptoms to have an accurate record for future medical assessments.

For Parents and Caregivers

Concussion Guide for Parents and Caregivers

This handout is to help parents and caregivers recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion in their child. This guide will also educate parents on how to properly manage a recovering player and return them to hockey safely.

Concussion Code of Conduct Cards for Parents and Caregivers

These Code of Conduct cards reinforce behaviours that demonstrate respect for the game and respect for others. Committing to the Code of Conduct at the start of the season reminds everyone of their role in playing Smart Hockey.

Tools

“No Contact” Pinnies

Have players recovering from concussion wear a “no contact” pinny at all practices until they are medically cleared for contact. Gradually building physical activity is an important part of concussion recovery and, for young hockey players, so is being with their friends and teammates. These pinnies help coaches provide a safe training environment and allow a player to train with the team, with their physician’s approval, by letting everyone know that extra caution is needed. These pinnies can be

used when the player returns to no-contact training (step four of the Return-to-Sport strategy).

Concussion Clipboard

Coaches, trainers and/or team healthcare professionals should refer to the Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT) to help them recognize concussion signs and symptoms after an impact. Keep this tool on hand during off-ice training, practice and games.



Coaches' guide: how to use your Smart Hockey Concussion Kit

Initial education and preparation

- Start by reviewing the Concussion Guide for Coaches, Trainers & Safety Personnel, the Return-to-Sport Strategy, and the On-Ice Tips to Assist in Preventing Concussion & Other Injuries in Hockey to educate yourself on concussion prevention, recognition and management.
- Develop an Action Plan that all those involved with your hockey team are made aware of at the pre-season concussion education meeting.
- Review the Pre-Season Concussion Education Team Meeting Guide, Pre-Season Concussion Education Team Meeting Checklist, Pre-Season Concussion Education Sheet.
- Book a time to present these materials to your team and their families.

At your pre-season concussion education meeting

- Review all Smart Hockey resources, as well as your sport organization's concussion information, with players and their families.
- Distribute the following materials to players:
 - 12 on-ice tips to assist in preventing concussion & other injuries in hockey
 - Concussion Guide for Players
 - Concussion Code of Conduct: Players
 - Personal Concussion Record for Players
 - Concussion Ed App Card
- Distribute the following materials to parents and caregivers:
 - Concussion Guide for Parents and Caregivers
 - Concussion Code of Conduct: Parents and Caregivers

- Have players and parents sign a Concussion Code of Conduct card and sign yours too!
- After the meeting, have your team pose with the included We Play Smart Hockey sign and with permission from parents, post to your team's website and social media!

During the season

- Create and maintain a team environment where players feel comfortable speaking up. Give players opportunities at the start and end of practices and games to talk to you about any concerns they have, including possible concussion symptoms. Remember your players can get a concussion at home, at school, or elsewhere; not just on the ice.
- Keep all Smart Hockey resources and your sport organization's concussion card and other concussion resources on hand for reference.
- Have your Concussion Clipboard on the bench for quick access to the Concussion Recognition Tool.
- In the event of a suspected concussion, remove the player from play and consult your Action Plan.
- Distribute the Medical Assessment Letter to parents if their child suffers a concussion.
- Encourage players and their families to track concussions using the Personal Concussion Record so they can provide accurate concussion history to medical professionals.
- Use your "No Contact" pinnies when returning a recovering player to practice.
- Ensure concussed players follow the Return-to-Sport Strategy and are cleared by a doctor before returning to practice or games. Consult your organization's return to play protocol as well.

Pre-Season Resources



CONCUSSION EDUCATION TEAM MEETING GUIDE



Safety in hockey is a shared responsibility. Coaches, trainers, players on the ice, as well as families watching a game or practice play an important role in keeping all hockey players safe and healthy.

Work to ensure that everyone involved with your hockey team understands that a concussion is a serious brain injury, requiring adequate rest to recover. As a first step, make sure everyone knows they have a role in preventing concussions and knows what to do if one occurs. Pre-season team meetings with players, parents/caregivers, coaches and other sport stakeholders are a great way to do this.

WHO

The attendees at each pre-season team meeting should include:

- Coaches
- Trainer
- Safety and medical personnel
- All players
- All parents and/or caregivers.

We encourage teams to invite officials and rink staff to attend these concussion education meetings so that everyone on and around the ice is prepared with the basic knowledge to recognize a concussion, know the steps to take when one is suspected and manage player recovery.



WHAT

Concussion education sessions should include information on:

- The definition of concussion
- Possible causes/mechanisms of concussion in hockey
- Common signs and symptoms
- Steps that can be taken to prevent concussions and other injuries from occurring in hockey
- What to do when a player has suffered a suspected concussion or more serious head injury
- What measures should be taken to ensure proper medical assessment, including Return-to-School and Return-to-Sport strategies and Return-to-Sport medical clearance requirements.

In addition to reviewing information on concussion, it is also important that all sport stakeholders have a clear understanding of the league's concussion protocol and policies at the beginning of each hockey season and agree to follow it.

WHEN

Many teams already have pre-season meetings for registration and player safety where this additional concussion information could fit.

These concussion education team meetings are helpful for the pre-season and can fit within any team's schedule.

Concussion education should take place at least once a year.

WHERE

The venue for each team meeting could be a sports arena, team dressing room, a participating school or a community centre.

HOW

Provide concussion education using the **Pre-Season Concussion Education Checklist** and the **Pre-Season Concussion Education Sheet** included in this kit.

Have the sheet reviewed and signed by all stakeholders at the time of registration or before the beginning of each hockey season.

This will confirm that the key information has been received and understood by all participants.

Be sure to provide all necessary handouts to players and parents at the end of the education session.

Review the **Code of Conduct** with your team and be sure to cover the key components of your league's concussion protocol and policies.

Ensuring everyone knows this information and commits to acting accordingly will support decision-making should any incidents come up during the season.

CONCUSSION EDUCATION CHECKLIST



Pre-Season Education Task	What to use to complete the task
Make concussion education a priority to talk about with players, parents and all sport stakeholders. Plan an educational session with your team, using this checklist and the Concussion Education Pre-Season Team Meeting Guide to ensure you are covering all the necessary material.	Pre-Season Concussion Education Team Meeting Guide <input type="checkbox"/>
Review your league's concussion protocol to make sure you are familiar with your responsibility to player safety.	League concussion protocol and any additional concussion resources available <input type="checkbox"/>
Plan to include the following information in your concussion education meeting and be sure you are also incorporating your governing league's concussion protocols and information. If you have invited a guest speaker, ask them to cover these topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The definition of concussion • Possible causes/ mechanisms of injury (i.e. how a concussion might occur) • Common signs and symptoms of concussion • Steps that can be taken to prevent concussions and other injuries from occurring in hockey • What to do when a player suffers a suspected concussion or more serious head injury • What measures should be taken to ensure proper medical assessment, Return-to-School and Return-to-Sport strategies • Return-to-Sport medical clearance requirements 	Pre-Season Concussion Education Team Meeting Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Season Concussion Education Sheet <input type="checkbox"/>

Pre-Season Education Task	What to use to complete the task
Invite all meeting participants to download Concussion Ed, a free app that helps players and parents to prevent, recognize and manage concussion.	Concussion Ed cards <input type="checkbox"/>
Take a picture posing with your team holding a “We Play Smart Hockey” sign to demonstrate that you are a Smart Hockey league! Post to your team and/or league’s website or social media channels, with the permission of all players and their parents.	We Play Smart Hockey sign <input type="checkbox"/>
Share resources from the Smart Hockey kit that team members and their families can take home, to help them stay educated and prevent hockey-related concussion and other injuries. Be sure to also provide your governing league’s concussion information and resources.	<p>Parachute Smart Hockey Concussion Kit handouts</p> <p>The handouts included in your kit to be distributed are:</p> <p>For players:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concussion Ed promotion card <input type="checkbox"/> • 12 on-ice tips for players <input type="checkbox"/> • Concussion guide for players <input type="checkbox"/> • Concussion code of conduct card for players <input type="checkbox"/> • Personal concussion record <input type="checkbox"/> <p>For parents and caregivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concussion guide for parents and caregivers <input type="checkbox"/> • Concussion code of conduct card for parents and caregivers <input type="checkbox"/> • Medical assessment letter (when necessary – five included in your kit) <input type="checkbox"/> • Your league’s concussion protocol, resources and information <input type="checkbox"/>

CONCUSSION EDUCATION SHEET



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that can't be seen on x-rays, CT or MRI scans. It affects the way a player thinks and can cause a variety of symptoms.

What causes a concussion?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or somewhere else on the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion. Examples include getting body-checked in hockey or hitting one's head on the floor in gym class.

When should I suspect a concussion?

A concussion should be suspected in any athlete who sustains a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body and reports any symptoms or demonstrates any visual signs of a concussion. A concussion should also be suspected if an athlete reports any concussion symptoms to one of their peers, parents, teachers, or coaches or if anyone witnesses an athlete exhibiting any of the visual signs of concussion. Some athletes will develop symptoms immediately, while others will develop delayed symptoms, beginning 24 to 48 hours after the injury.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

A person does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. Common symptoms include:

- Headaches or head pressure
- Dizziness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Blurred or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or sound
- Balance problems
- Feeling tired or having no energy
- Not thinking clearly
- Feeling slowed down
- Easily upset or angered
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Feeling more emotional
- Sleeping more or sleeping less
- Having a hard time falling asleep
- Difficulty working on a computer
- Difficulty reading
- Difficulty learning new information

What are the visual signs of a concussion?

Visual signs of a concussion may include:

- Lying motionless on the playing surface
- Slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head
- Disorientation or confusion or inability to respond appropriately to questions
- Blank or vacant stare
- Balance and gait difficulties, poor co-ordination, stumbling, slow laboured movements
- Facial injury after head trauma
- Clutching head

What should I do if I suspect a concussion?

If any player is suspected of sustaining a concussion during sports they should be

immediately removed from the game or practice. Any player who is suspected of having sustained a concussion during sports must not be allowed to return to the same game or practice.

It is important that ALL players with a suspected concussion undergo medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, as soon as possible. It is also important that ALL players with a suspected concussion receive written medical clearance from a medical doctor before returning to sport.

When can the player return to school and sports?

It is important that all players diagnosed with a concussion follow a step-wise return to school and sports- related activities that includes the following Return-to-School and Return-to-Sport Strategies. It is important that youth return to full-time school activities before progressing to step 4 of the Return-to-Sport Strategy.

Return-to-School Strategy

Stage	Activity	Description	Goal of each step
1	Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24 to 48 hours)	Typical activities at home (e.g. preparing meals, social interactions, light walking) that do not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms. Minimize screen time.	Gradual reintroduction of typical activities
2	School activities with encouragement to return to school (as tolerated)	Homework, reading or other light cognitive activities at school or home. Take breaks and adapt activities as needed. Gradually resume screen time, as tolerated.	Increase tolerance to cognitive work and connect socially with peers

3	Part-time or full days at school with accommodations (as needed)	Gradually reintroduce schoolwork. Part-time school days with access to breaks and other accommodations may be required. Gradually reduce accommodations related to the concussion and increase workload.	Increase academic activities.
4	Return to school full-time	Return to full days at school and academic activities, without accommodations related to the concussion.	Return to full academic activities and catch up on missed school work.

Sport-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy

Stage	Activity	Description	Goal of each step
1	Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24-28 hours)	Typical activities at home (e.g. preparing meals, social interactions, light walking). Minimize screen time.	Gradual re-introduction of typical work/school activities.
2	2A: Light effort aerobic exercise 2B: Moderate effort aerobic exercise	Walking or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. May begin light resistance training. Gradually increase intensity of aerobic activities, such as stationary cycling and walking at a brisk pace.	Increase heart rate.
3	Individual sport-specific activities, without risk of inadvertent head impact	Add sport-specific activities (e.g., running, skating drills, shooting a puck). Perform activities individually and under supervision.	Increase the intensity of aerobic activities and introduce low-risk sport-specific movements.
4	Non-contact training drills and activities	Following medical clearance, progress to exercises with no body contact at high intensity, including more challenging drills and activities (e.g., passing drills, multi-player training and practices).	Resume usual intensity of exercise, co-ordination and activity-related cognitive skills
5	Return to all non-competitive activities, full-contact practice and physical education activities	Progress to higher-risk activities including typical training activities, full-contact sport practices and physical education class activities. Do not participate in competitive gameplay.	Return to activities that have a risk of falling or body contact, restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff.
6	Return to sport	Unrestricted game play and physical activity	

Tables adapted from
Patricios, Schneider et al., 2023; Reed, Zemek et al., 2023

How long will it take for the player to recover?

Most players who sustain a concussion will make a complete recovery within four weeks. Approximately 15 to 30 per cent of patients will experience persisting symptoms (more than four weeks) that may require additional medical assessment and management.

How can I help prevent concussions and their consequences?

Concussion prevention, recognition and management require players to follow the rules and regulations of their sport, respect their opponents, avoid head contact and report suspected concussions.

To learn more about concussions please visit:

www.parachute.ca/concussion

SIGNATURES (OPTIONAL): The following signatures certify that the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian have reviewed the above information related to concussion.

Printed name of player

Printed name of parent/guardian

Signature of player

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

Concussion Code of Conduct for COACHES, TEAM TRAINERS & SAFETY PERSONNEL



I will help players on my team to prevent concussion.

- I will ensure all players on my team wear the proper equipment and wear it correctly.
- I will help players develop their skills and strength so they can play to the best of their ability.
- I will respect the rules of my hockey league and ensure all players on my team do as well.
- I will respect other coaches, trainers, safety personnel, officials and all those involved with my league and team.
- I will ensure players on my team respect others and play fair and safe.

I will take concussions seriously and educate my team to help ensure their health and safety.

- I understand a concussion is a serious brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- I understand that any blow to the head, face, or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion.
- I understand that a player doesn't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- If I suspect a player may have a concussion, I will stop them from participating in practice or gameplay immediately. I understand that if I think I have a concussion, I should stop coaching, training, or safety person responsibilities/activities immediately.
- I understand continuing to participate in hockey and other physical activity with a suspected concussion increases a player's risk of more severe, longer-lasting symptoms, and increases their risk of other injuries.
- I will make concussion education a priority on my team.
- I will follow and enforce my league's concussion protocol and policies.

I will create an environment where players on my team feel safe and can always speak up.

- I will encourage players not to hide any concussion symptoms or play through the pain.
- I will ensure my players know to tell me, another coach, an official, parent or other adult they trust if they, or a teammate, experience any concussion symptoms after an impact.
- I will lead by example. I will tell a fellow coach, official, team trainer, safety person, or healthcare professional if I am experiencing any concussion symptoms.
- I will create opportunities for players to speak with me about any concerns related to concussion before or after each training session, practice, or game.
- I will support all players on my team to take the time they need to recover.
- I understand and respect that any player with a suspected concussion must be removed from the game immediately and not be permitted to return until they undergo a medical assessment by a doctor and have been medically cleared to return to training, practice, or gameplay.
- I understand players will have to follow the Return-to-Sport strategy.
- I understand players will have to be cleared by a doctor before returning to hockey or other physical activity after a concussion.
- I will respect my fellow coaches, trainers, safety personnel, parents and medical professionals and any decisions made with regards to the health and safety of my team.

Coach/Trainer/Safety Person

Date



I will do my best to protect myself and others from concussion.

- I will wear the proper hockey equipment and wear it correctly.
- I will develop my skill and body strength so that I can play to the best of my abilities.
- I will respect the rules of the game.
- I will respect myself and my opponents.
- I will not fight or attempt to injure anyone on purpose.
- I will not hit or push another player from behind or hit to the head.
- I will not hit or push another player if they are in a vulnerable position.
- I will play safe, smart and fair.

I will take concussions and concussion education seriously.

- I understand a concussion is a serious brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- I understand that I do not need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- I understand that any blow to the head, face, or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion.
- I understand if I think I might have a concussion I should stop playing immediately.
- I understand continuing to play with a suspected concussion increases my risk of more severe, longer lasting concussion symptoms, as well as increases my risk of other injury.
- I will follow and respect the concussion protocol and policies of my hockey league.

I will not play through the pain. I will speak up for myself and others.

- I will not hide my symptoms. I will tell my coach, trainer, safety person, parent, caregiver, or other adult I trust if I think I might have a concussion and/or experience any signs and symptoms of concussion following an impact.
- If another player tells me about concussion symptoms, or I notice they might have a concussion, I will tell a coach, official, team trainer, safety person, parent or another adult I trust so they can help.
- I understand that letting all my coaches and teachers know about any diagnosed concussions will help them support my recovery.
- I understand if I show any signs or symptoms of concussion, I will be removed from practice or gameplay and cannot return until I am assessed by a doctor.

I will not return to hockey or other physical activity until I am ready and fully recovered.

- I understand I will not be able to return to practice or gameplay following an impact where I experience any signs and symptoms of concussion.
- I understand I will have to be cleared by a doctor, preferably one with experience in concussion management, prior to returning to hockey and other physical activity.
- I understand I will have to follow the Return-to-Sport strategy when returning to hockey and other physical activity.
- I will respect my coaches, trainers, team safety personnel, parents and medical professionals and any decisions made with regards to my health and safety.

Player

Parent/Caregiver
(if under 18 years of age)

Date

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS



I will help my child prevent concussion.

- I will ensure my child wears the proper hockey equipment and wears it correctly.
- I will help my child develop their skills and strength so they can play to the best of their ability.
- I will respect the rules of my child's hockey league and ensure my child does as well.
- I will respect my child's coaches, trainers, safety personnel, officials and all those involved with the league and team.
- I will ensure my child respects other players and plays fair and safe.

I will be aware of signs and symptoms of concussion in my child and take concussions seriously.

- I understand a concussion is a serious brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- I understand that any blow to the head, face, or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion.
- I understand that my child doesn't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- If I suspect my child may have a concussion, I will ensure they stop participating in practice or gameplay immediately.
- I understand continuing to participate in hockey and other physical activity with a suspected concussion increases my child's risk of more severe, longer-lasting symptoms, and increases their risk of other serious injuries.
- I will be aware of and follow the concussion protocol and policies of my child's hockey league.

I will ensure my child feels comfortable speaking up if they experience any signs or symptoms of a concussion.

- I will encourage my child not to play through the pain or hide any concussion symptoms.
- I will ensure my child knows to tell me, their coach, their trainer, safety person, an official, or other adult they trust if they experience any concussion symptoms after an impact.
- I will ensure my child tells their coaches and teachers about any diagnosed concussions so they can support my child's recovery.

I will support my child's recovery and ensure they do not return to hockey or other physical activity until they are fully recovered.

- I understand and respect that if my child shows any signs or symptoms of concussion, they will be removed from practice or gameplay and cannot return until they are assessed by a doctor and are medically cleared to return.
- I understand my child has to follow the Return-to-Sport strategy and I will help them do so.
- I understand my child will have to be cleared by a doctor before returning to hockey or other physical activity after a concussion.
- I will respect my child's coaches, trainers and medical professionals and any decisions made with regards to the health and safety of my child.

Parent/Caregiver

Name of Player

Date

Resources for Coaches, Trainers, Safety Personnel



On-ice tips to assist in preventing

CONCUSSION & OTHER INJURIES IN HOCKEY



Be sure to enforce and integrate these 12 on-ice tips for players into drills and practices wherever possible. This will help your team build critical skills, stay safe and encourage them to always play Smart Hockey.

- There are a variety of drills you can run to help players learn to keep their head up while skating and improve stick handling.
- Run puck-handling drills where the player has to look up and shout the number of fingers they see held up by the coach.
- Bring a beach ball (or other light ball) onto the ice and toss it at players to punch back to you while completing a skating pattern.
- Vary the number of defenders used throughout the same attacking drill so players must look up and identify how many defenders there are each time they go through the drill.

12 On-Ice Tips



- Be a good skater and commit to strong skill development.
- Always approach the boards on an angle.
- Get your arms up when sliding into the boards.
- Know the danger zone: three to four feet from the boards.



- Never hit or push a player from behind.
- Never hit to the head.
- Keep your head up when handling the puck. Play Smart Hockey; don't put yourself in a vulnerable position.
- Respect the safety of yourself and everyone on the ice. Avoid contact with a player if they are in a vulnerable position, such as with their back facing you.



- Be aware and stay alert.
- Control your stick responsibly.
- Communicate with your teammates. If you think a teammate may have a concussion, report symptoms to your coach, team trainer, or safety personnel.
- Remove yourself from the ice if you experience any concussion symptoms after a hard fall or contact with another player. Report symptoms to your coach, team trainer or safety personnel.

These on-ice tips have been adapted from ThinkFirst Smart Hockey 2015 and Hockey Canada's Concussion Education and Awareness Program.

COACHES AND TRAINERS



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way a player may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

A player does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion.

The player might experience one or more of the following:

Cognitive (thinking)	Physical	Emotional/behavioural
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not know time, date, place, period of game, opposing team, score of game• Difficulty remembering things that happened before and after the injury• Difficulty concentrating• Not thinking clearly• Feeling like “in a fog”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headache or head pressure• Dizziness• Stomachache, nausea, vomiting• Blank or vacant stare• Blurred or fuzzy vision• Sensitive to light or sound• Sees stars, flashing lights• Ringing in the ears• Problems with balance or co-ordination• Feels tired or no energy• “Don’t feel right”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nervousness or anxiety• Strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e., laughing, crying, getting mad easily)• Slow to answer questions or follow directions• Easily distracted• Not playing well• Changes in sleep patterns (sleeping more or less than usual)

Get medical help immediately if a player has any “red flag” symptoms such as neck pain, repeated vomiting, growing confusion, seizures, and weakness or tingling in their arms or legs. These may be signs of a more serious injury.

What causes a concussion?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion (e.g., hitting their head on the ice, colliding with another player, being checked into the boards).

What should I do if I think a player might have a concussion?

In all suspected cases of concussion, the player should stop playing right away. Continuing to play increases their risk of more severe, longer-lasting concussion symptoms, and increases their risk of other injury.

Refer to the Concussion Recognition Tool 6 (CRT6) to help recognize the signs and symptoms of a possible concussion.

The player should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day. Older players who have driver's licences should not drive.

If the player loses consciousness or demonstrates any red flag symptoms, call an ambulance to take them to the hospital right away and initiate your Emergency Action Plan. Do not move them or remove any of their equipment, such as their helmet.

The player should not return to training, practice or gameplay the same day.

How long will it take for the player to get better?

The signs and symptoms of a concussion usually last up to four weeks, but may last longer. In some cases, it may take many weeks or months for the player to heal. If the player has had a previous concussion, they may take longer to recover. No two concussions are the same. Avoid comparing one player's recovery to another's.

If the player's symptoms are persistent (i.e., last longer than four weeks) they should be referred to a healthcare professional who is an expert in the management of concussion.

How is concussion treated?

For the first 24 to 48 hours after the injury, the player can engage in activities of daily living, such as light walking and preparing meals, and social interactions at home. Screen time should be minimized in the first 48 hours. Then, school and sport activities can be introduced and increased gradually.

As the player is returning to activities, their symptoms may feel a little worse. This is common and OK as long as it is mild and brief. "Brief" means their symptoms should settle back down within an hour. If activities make their symptoms worsen more than this, they should take a break and adapt activities.

Recovering from concussion is a process that takes patience. If the player goes back to activities before they are ready, it is likely to make their symptoms worse, and their recovery might take longer.

When should the player go to the doctor?

Anyone with a possible head injury should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible.

The player should go back to the doctor immediately if, after being told they have a concussion, they have worsening symptoms, such as:

- being more confused
- headache that is getting worse
- vomiting more than twice
- not waking up
- having any trouble walking
- having a seizure
- strange behaviour

When can the player return to school?

On average, students with a concussion miss one or more days of school. Each concussion is unique, so the player may progress at a different rate than others. Generally, more than one week of complete absence from the school environment is not recommended.

The Return-to-School Strategy provides detailed information on the stages of returning to the classroom and can be accessed at parachute.ca/smarthockey.

Return to school must come before full return to sport.

When can the player return to sport?

Return to hockey and other physical activity must follow a step-wise approach. Returning before full recovery from concussion puts players at higher risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be more severe and last longer. Return to hockey and other physical activity must follow a step-wise approach.

In the Return-to-Sport Strategy:

- Each stage is at least 24 hours.
- If their symptoms worsen more than mildly and briefly, the player should stop and try again the next day at the same step.
- According to Hockey Canada's Concussion Protocol, if the player experiences concussion symptoms after medical clearance (i.e., during steps 4 to 6), they should return to step 3 to establish full resolution of symptoms. Medical clearance will be required again before progressing to step 4.

Step 1: Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24 to 48 hours). The player can start with daily activities, such as moving around the home, simple chores (such as making their bed), preparing meals, light walking and social interactions (such as talking with friends or family). Minimize screen time.

Step 2: Light to moderate aerobic exercise.

2A: Start with light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling at a slow to medium pace (for 10 to 15 minutes). The player may begin light resistance training, if appropriate, that does not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms.

2B: Gradually increase the intensity of aerobic exercise to moderate effort, such as stationary cycling or walking at a brisk pace. Moderate effort means the activity may cause faster breathing and heart rate, but not enough to prevent you from being able to talk comfortably.

Step 3: Individual sport-specific activities, without risk of inadvertent head impact. Add sport-specific activities that can be done individually (away from other participants) in a low-risk environment for 20 to 30 minutes (e.g. running, skating, shooting a puck). Activities should be supervised by a coach, trainer, teacher or parent/caregiver. Continue progressing at this step until symptom-free, even when exercising. **Medical clearance is required before step 4.**

Stage 4: Training drills and activities with no contact. Ensure teammates give the recovering player extra space. Progress to usual intensity exercise and add in more challenging drills (e.g., shooting and passing drills). Participate in multi-athlete training (if applicable) and non-contact practices. There should be no impact activities (e.g., no checking).

Stage 5: Return to non-competitive activities, full-contact practice and physical education activities. Progress to typical physical activities, except for competitive gameplay. Restore confidence and skills.

Step 6: Return to hockey and full game play without restriction. A player should never return to contact practice or gameplay until cleared by a doctor!

How can I help players prevent concussions?

Invest time into pre-season concussion education meetings and use the pre-season team meeting checklist to guide your meetings. Ensure your team understands all necessary concussion information and provide them with the resources available in this kit. Let them know they can ask questions at any time and should always report any concussion symptoms to you, their parents, or another adult they trust.

Enforce the 12 on-ice tips during practice and gameplay. Ensure players are made aware when

they are playing unsafe and putting themselves or others at risk of injury. Support enforcement of the rules by officials, especially rules in place to reduce head contact.

Ensure players have all the required equipment to participate in practices and games safely. Skates should fit properly and be in good condition, to prevent falls and crashes. **Helmets do not prevent concussions** but should always be worn properly to prevent other head injuries. **Mouthguards have not been proven to prevent concussions**, but may reduce risk and should always be worn to prevent injuries to the mouth and teeth.



ACTION PLAN



To make sure concussions are managed properly, put an action plan in place that coaches, trainers, players and their parents/caregivers are all involved in.

- Identify safety personnel who can assist with managing the health of the team and are knowledgeable about concussions, know the action plan and know what to do when a concussion is suspected.
- Provide players and families with concussion resources so everyone knows what to look for to keep players safe.
- Always have a Concussion Recognition Tool 6 (CRT6) and your organization's concussion card at practices and games so that you have a list of concussion signs and symptoms available, and information on the first steps to take when a concussion is suspected.

If you suspect a concussion has occurred

- 1 Coach, trainer or official removes the player from the game, practice or training.
- 2 Coach or trainer ensures the player is not left alone. Monitor signs and symptoms and do not administer any medication unless it is required for a medical condition (e.g. insulin for diabetes).. The player must not return to the game or practice that day.
- 3 Coach informs the player's parent or guardian about the known or suspected concussion and provides them handouts from the kit, and the parachute.ca/concussion and parachute.ca/smarthockey links.
- 4 Parent or guardian ensures the player is evaluated by a medical doctor as soon as possible.
- 5 Coaches, trainers and parents share the responsibility to communicate with the player to ensure that if they are diagnosed with a concussion, they are following the league's concussion protocol and policies and a medically supervised Return-to-Sport strategy. Players may only return to full practice and game play when they have been cleared by their doctor.

When in Doubt, Sit Them Out!

If you notice any "red flag" symptoms

- "Red flag" symptoms can be signs of a more serious injury. Get medical help immediately if you notice that a player has any of the following symptoms:
 - Neck pain or tenderness
 - Repeated vomiting
 - Growing confusion
 - Seizures or convulsions
 - Weakness, tingling or burning in their arms or legs
 - Increasingly restless, agitated or combative
 - Double vision
 - Severe or increasing headache
 - Deteriorating conscious state or loss of consciousness
- If there is loss of consciousness, initiate the Emergency Action Plan and call an ambulance.
- Assume possible neck injury and continue to monitor airway, breathing and circulation. Do not attempt to remove any equipment, including their helmet.

RETURN-TO-SPORT STRATEGY



A concussion is a serious injury, but you can recover fully if your brain is given enough time to rest and recuperate.

Returning to normal activities, including sport participation, is a step-wise process that requires patience, attention, and caution.

In the Return-to-Sport Strategy:

- Each stage is at least 24 hours.
- It is common and OK for a person's symptoms to worsen mildly and briefly* with activity as they move through the return-to-sport steps. But, if their symptoms worsen more than this, they should stop the activity and try again the next day at the same step.
 - According to Hockey Canada's Concussion Protocol, if the player experiences concussion symptoms after medical clearance (i.e., during steps 4 to 6), they should return to step 3 to establish full resolution of symptoms. Medical clearance will be required again before progressing to step 4.

*Symptom worsening should not last more than one hour.



Step 1: Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24 to 48 hours)

For the first 24 to 48 hours after the injury, start with daily activities such as moving around the home, preparing meals, light walking and social interactions (e.g., talking with friends or family). Minimize screen time.



Step 2: Light to moderate effort aerobic exercise

2A: Start with light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling at a slow to medium pace. May begin light resistance training that does not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms.

2B: Gradually increase the intensity of aerobic exercise to moderate effort, such as stationary cycling or walking at a brisk pace. Moderate effort means the activity may cause faster breathing and heart rate, but not enough to prevent you from being able to talk comfortably.



Stage 3: Individual sport-specific activities, without risk of inadvertent head impact

Add sport-specific activities (e.g., running, skating, shooting a puck) that can be done individually (away from other participants) in a low-risk environment. Activities should be supervised by a coach, trainer, teacher or parent/caregiver. Continue progressing at this step until symptom-free, even when exercising.

Medical clearance is required before step 4.



Step 4: Training drills and activities with no contact

Progress to usual intensity exercise and add in more challenging drills such as passing drills. Participate in multi-athlete training and non-contact practices. There should be no impact activities (e.g., no checking).



Step 5: Return to non-competitive activities, full contact practice and physical education activities

Progress to typical physical activities, except for competitive gameplay. Restore confidence and skills.



Step 6: Return to Sport and physical activity without restriction

How long does this process take?

Each stage is a minimum of 24 hours, but could take longer. Since each concussion is unique, people will progress at different rates. For most people, symptoms improve within four weeks. If you have had a concussion before, you may take longer to heal the next time.

If symptoms last longer than four weeks, your doctor should consider referring you to a healthcare professional who is an expert in the management of concussion.

How do I find the right doctor?

When dealing with concussions, it is important to see a doctor who is knowledgeable in concussion management. This might include your family doctor or a specialist, such as a sports medicine physician. Your family doctor may be required to submit a referral for you to see a specialist.

Contact the Canadian Academy of Sport and Exercise Medicine (CASEM) to find a sports medicine physician in your area.

Visit www.casem-acmse.org for more information. You can also refer your doctor to parachute.ca/concussion for more information.

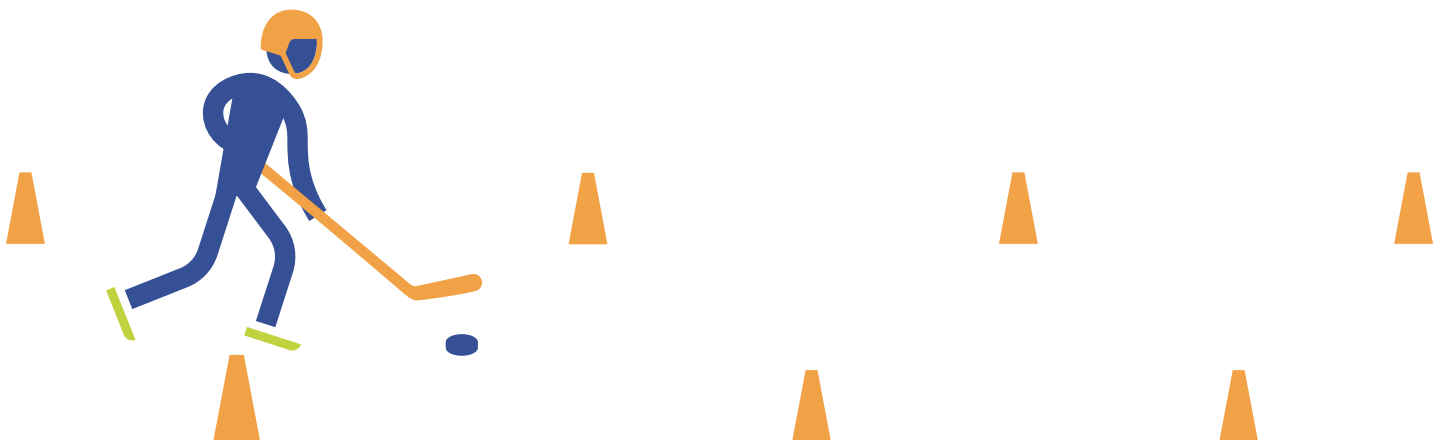
What if my symptoms return or get worse?

As you are returning to activities, your symptoms may feel a little worse. This is common and OK as long as it is mild and brief. “Brief” means your symptoms should settle back down within an hour. If activities make your symptoms worsen more than this, Hockey Canada’s Concussion Policy recommends you stop and try again the next day at the same step.

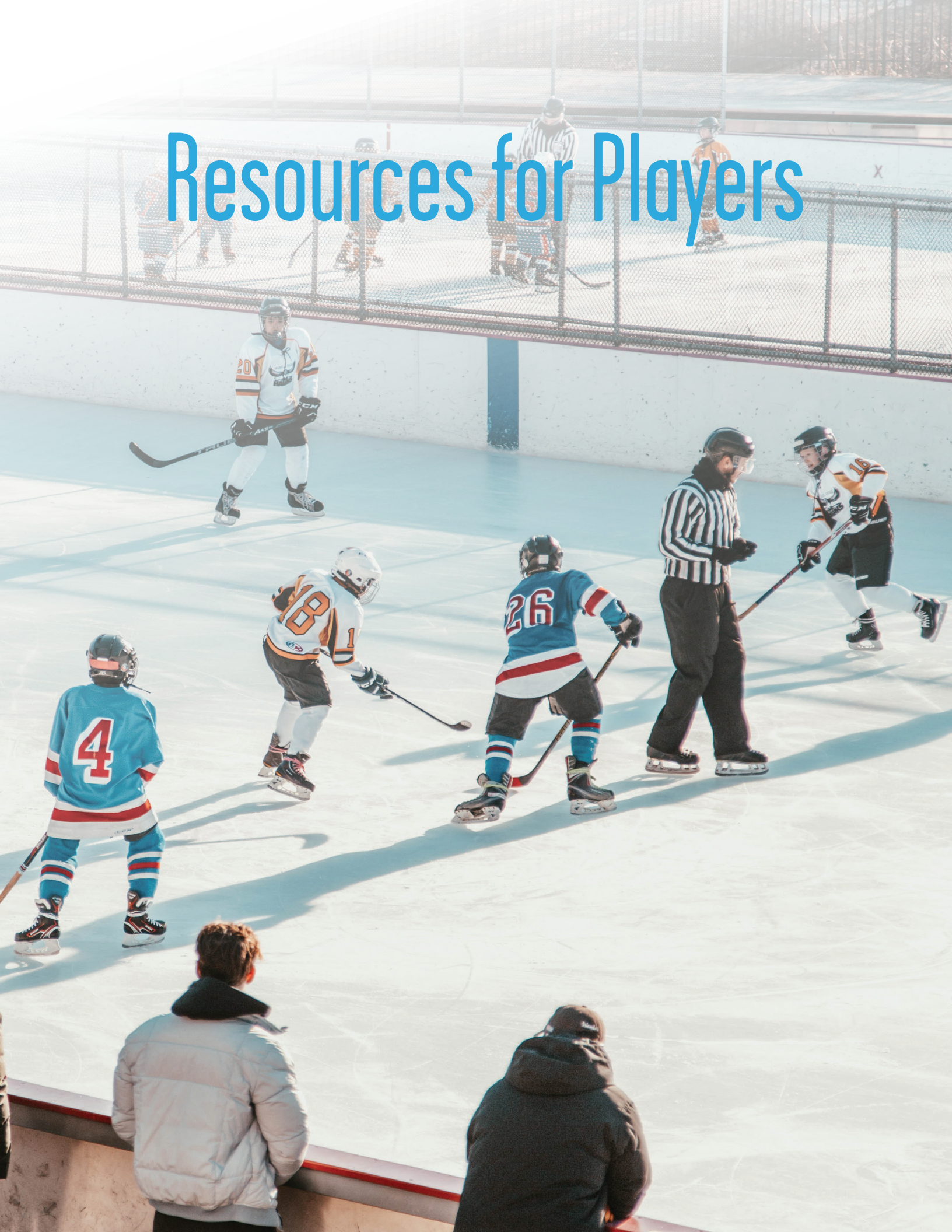
If symptoms return after medical clearance (stages 4, 5 and 6), you should be re-assessed by your doctor before resuming activities.

Returning to play with risk of contact before full recovery from concussion puts you at higher risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be more severe and last longer.

Never return to contact practice or gameplay until cleared by a doctor!



Resources for Players



On-Ice Tips for Players

Follow these 12 on-ice tips to keep yourself and others safe. Play safe. Play Smart Hockey.

Be a good skater and commit to strong skill development.



Get your arms up when sliding into the boards.



Always approach the boards on an angle.



Know the danger zone: three to four feet from the boards.



Never hit or push another player from behind.



Never hit to the head.



Keep your head up when handling the puck. Play Smart Hockey; don't put yourself in a vulnerable position.



Respect the safety of yourself and everyone on the ice. Avoid contact with a player if they are in a vulnerable position, such as with their back facing you.



Be aware and stay alert.



Control your stick responsibly.



Remove yourself from the ice if you experience any concussion symptoms after a hard fall or contact with another player. Report symptoms to your coach, team trainer or safety personnel.



Communicate with your teammates. If you think a teammate may have a concussion, report symptoms to your coach, team trainer, or safety personnel.





What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way you may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

You do not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. You might experience one or more of the following:

Cognitive (thinking)	Physical	Emotional/behavioural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not know the time, date, place, details about a recent activity • Difficulty remembering things that happened before and after the injury • Difficulty concentrating • Not thinking clearly • Feeling like “in a fog” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache or head pressure • Dizziness • Stomachache, nausea, vomiting • Blank or vacant stare • Blurred or fuzzy vision • Sensitive to light or sound • See stars, flashing lights • Ringing in the ears • Problems with balance or co-ordination • Feel tired or no energy • “Don’t feel right” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervousness or anxiety • Strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e., laughing, crying, getting mad easily) • Slow to answer questions or follow directions • Easily distracted • Not playing well • Changes in sleep patterns (sleeping more or less than usual)

Get medical help immediately if you have any “red flag” symptoms such as neck pain, repeated vomiting, growing confusion, seizures, and weakness or tingling in your arms or legs. These may be signs of a more serious injury.

What causes a concussion?

Any blow to your head, face or neck, or a blow to your body which causes a sudden jarring of your head may cause a concussion (e.g., hitting your head on the ice, colliding with another player, being checked into the boards).

What should I do if I think I might have a concussion?

You should stop playing right away. Continuing to play increases your risk of more severe, longer-lasting concussion symptoms and increases your risk of other injury.

Tell your coach, team trainer, parent, official, or another adult you trust that you are concerned you might have a concussion. You should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day. You should not drive.

If you lose consciousness or demonstrate any red flag symptoms, an ambulance should be called to take you to a hospital immediately.

Do not return to play the same day.

What should I do if I think my teammate might have a concussion?

If another player tells you about symptoms or if you notice signs they might have a concussion, tell a coach, team trainer, parent, official or other responsible person. They should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day.

If another player is knocked out or shows red flag symptoms, an ambulance should be called to take them to a hospital immediately.

How long will it take to get better?

The signs and symptoms of a concussion usually last for up to four weeks, but may last longer. In

some cases, it may take many weeks or months to heal. If you have had a previous concussion, you may take longer to recover.

No two concussions are the same. Do not compare your recovery to someone else's, or even to a previous concussion you have had.

If your symptoms last longer than four weeks you should be referred to a healthcare professional who is an expert in the management of concussion.

How is concussion treated?

or the first 24 to 48 hours after your injury, you can do activities of daily living at home. These are things such as moving around your home, preparing meals, light walking and talking to family or friends. For the first 48 hours, spend less time with screens, such as phones, TVs and computers. Then, school and sport activities can be introduced and increased gradually.

As you are returning to activities, your symptoms may feel a little worse. This is common and OK as long as it is mild and brief. "Brief" means your symptoms should settle back down within an hour. If activities make your symptoms worsen more than this, take a break and adapt activities.

Recovering from concussion is a process that takes patience. Going back to activities before you are ready is likely to make your symptoms worse, and your recovery may take longer.

When should I go to the doctor?

Anyone with a possible head injury should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible. If you are diagnosed with a concussion, your doctor should schedule a follow-up visit with you within the next one to two weeks.

You should go back to the doctor immediately if, after being told you have a concussion, you have worsening symptoms, such as:

- being more confused

- headache that is getting worse
- vomiting more than twice
- not waking up
- having any trouble walking
- having a seizure
- strange behaviour

When can I return to school?

You might miss one or more days of school. Generally, more than one week of complete absence from the school environment is not recommended. Medical clearance is not required to return to school.

You may find it hard to concentrate in class, get a worse headache, or feel sick to your stomach. You may need to begin with partial days at school and may need accommodations to help you tolerate your workload and the school environment. Examples include access to breaks, extra time to complete work, permission to wear sunglasses in class or a quiet place to eat lunch.

Each concussion is unique, so you may progress at a different rate than other people you know. You should not rush through your return to activities. At the same time, if you can tolerate being at school, you should not be restricted from attending.

The Return-to-School Strategy provides information on the stages of returning to the classroom, and can be accessed at parachute.ca/smarthockey.

Remember, return to school must come before you seek medical clearance for full return to unrestricted sport activities.

When can I return to sport?

Return to sport and physical activity must follow a step-wise approach.

In the Return-to-Sport Strategy:

- Each stage is at least 24 hours.

- Move on to the next stage when you can tolerate activities.
- If your symptoms worsen more than mildly and briefly, stop and try again the next day at the same step.
- According to Hockey Canada's Concussion Protocol, if you experience concussion symptoms after medical clearance (i.e., during steps 4 to 6), you should return to step 3 to establish full resolution of symptoms. Medical clearance will be required again before progressing to step 4.

Step 1: Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24 to 48 hours). Start with daily living activities such as moving around the house, preparing meals, light walking and social interactions (e.g., talking with friends or family). Minimize screen time.

Step 2: Light to moderate effort aerobic exercise

2A: Start with light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling at a slow to medium pace. You can begin light resistance training that does not result in more than mild and brief worsening of your symptoms.

2B: Gradually increase the intensity to moderate effort, such as stationary cycling or walking at a brisk pace. Moderate effort means the activity may cause faster breathing and heart rate, but not enough to prevent you from being able to talk comfortably.

Step 3: Individual sport-specific activities, without risk of inadvertent head impact. Add sport-specific activities (e.g., running, skating, shooting a puck) that can be done individually (away from other participants) in a low-risk environment. Activities should be supervised by a coach, trainer, teacher or parent/caregiver. Continue progressing at this step until symptom-free, even when exercising.

Medical clearance is required before step 4.

Step 4: Training drills and activities with no contact (no checking). Progress to usual intensity exercise and add in more challenging drills such as passing drills. Participate in multi-athlete training and non-contact practices.

Step 5: Return to non-competitive activities, full-contact practice and physical education activities.

Progress to typical physical activities, except for competitive gameplay. Restore your confidence and skills.

Step 6: Return to sport and physical activity without restriction.

Never return to contact practice or gameplay until cleared by a doctor!

How can I prevent concussions?

Follow the 12 on-ice tips provided in this kit to ensure you are playing Smart Hockey and protecting yourself and others from injuries. Respect the rules of the game, especially ones that are in place to reduce head contact.

Wear the appropriate equipment at all times and ensure that all of your equipment fits properly. Your skates need to fit properly and be in good condition to prevent falls and crashes. **Helmets do not prevent concussion**, but always wear your helmet properly to prevent other head injuries. **Mouthguards have not been proven to prevent concussions**, but always wear a properly fitted mouthguard to protect your mouth and teeth.



PERSONAL CONCUSSION RECORD FOR PLAYERS



It is important for every player to record their concussions as they occur so that your team and doctors can be informed and as helpful as possible. Keep this record at home to keep track of your signs and symptoms, as well as to track your recovery process.

Personal Concussion Record

Date of concussion	
Activity and location	

Severity

Loss of consciousness?	YES	NO
What symptoms were experienced?		
How long did symptoms last?		
Did symptoms disappear completely?		

Testing

Was neuropsychological testing performed?	
<i>If so, where and by whom?</i>	
Was a CT or MRI performed?	
<i>If so, where?</i>	
Name and address of most involved physician	

Results

Was a medical clearance letter obtained before returning to sport?	
Date of return to sport	
Were any symptoms experienced upon returning to sport?	
Other comments and notes	

Resources for Parents and Caregivers



PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way your child may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Your child does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. Your child might experience one or more of the following:

Cognitive (thinking)	Physical	Emotional/behavioural
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not know the time, date, place, details about a recent activity• Difficulty remembering things that happened before and after the injury• Difficulty concentrating• Not thinking clearly• Feeling like “in a fog”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headache or head pressure• Dizziness• Stomachache, nausea, vomiting• Blank or vacant stare• Blurred or fuzzy vision• Sensitive to light or sound• Sees stars, flashing lights• Ringing in the ears• Problems with balance or co-ordination• Feels tired or no energy• “Don’t feel right”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nervousness or anxiety• Strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e., laughing, crying, getting mad easily)• Slow to answer questions or follow directions• Easily distracted• Not playing well• Changes in sleep patterns (sleeping more or less than usual)

Get medical help immediately if your child has any “red flag” symptoms such as neck pain, repeated vomiting, growing confusion, seizures, and weakness or tingling in their arms or legs. These may be signs of a more serious injury.

What causes a concussion?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion (e.g., hitting their head on the ice, colliding with another player, being checked into the boards).

What should I do if I suspect my child has a concussion?

In all suspected cases of concussion, your child should stop playing right away. Continuing to play with a concussion increases their risk of more severe, longer-lasting concussion symptoms, as well as increases their risk of other injury.

Refer to the Concussion Recognition Tool 6 (CRT6) to help you recognize the signs and symptoms of a possible concussion in your child.

Your child should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day.

If your child loses consciousness, call an ambulance to take them to the hospital right away. Do not move your child or remove any equipment, such as their helmet.

Your child should not return to play the same day.

How long will it take for my child to get better?

The signs and symptoms of a concussion often last for up to four weeks but may last longer. In some cases, children may take many weeks or months to heal. If your child has had a concussion before, they may take longer to recover.

No two concussions are the same. Avoid comparing your child's recovery to someone else's, or even to a concussion they experienced before.

If your child's symptoms last longer than four weeks, they should be referred to a healthcare professional who is an expert in the management of concussion.

How is concussion treated?

For the first 24 to 48 hours after the injury, your child can do activities of daily living, such as moving around the home, bathing, light walking and social interactions at home. For the first 48 hours, they should spend less time with screens, such as phones, TVs and computers. Then, school and sport activities can be introduced and increased gradually.

As your child is returning to activities, their symptoms may feel a little worse. This is common and OK as long as it is mild and brief. "Brief" means their symptoms should settle back down within an hour. If activities make their symptoms worsen more than this, they should take a break and adapt activities.

Recovering from concussion is a process that takes patience. If your child goes back to activities before they are ready, it is likely to make their symptoms worse, and their recovery might take longer.

When should my child go to the doctor?

Anyone with a possible head injury should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible. If your child is diagnosed with a concussion, the doctor should schedule a follow-up visit within the next one to two weeks.

Take your child back to the doctor immediately if, after being told they have a concussion, they have worsening symptoms, such as:

- being more confused
- headache that is getting worse
- vomiting more than twice
- not waking up
- having any trouble walking
- having a seizure
- strange behaviour

When can my child return to school?

A child with a concussion may miss one or more days of school. Generally, more than one week of complete absence from the school environment is not recommended. Medical clearance is not required to return to school.

Your child may find it hard to concentrate in class, get a worse headache or feel sick to their stomach. They may need to begin with partial days at school and may need accommodations to help them tolerate their workload and the school environment. Examples include access to breaks, extra time to complete work, permission to wear sunglasses in class or a quiet place to eat lunch.

Each concussion is unique, so your child may progress at a different rate than others. They should not be rushed through their return to activities. At the same time, if your child can tolerate being at school, they should not be restricted from attending.

The Return-to-School Strategy provides information on the stages of returning to the classroom, and can be accessed at parachute.ca/smarthockey.

Return to school must be completed before your child seeks medical clearance for full return to unrestricted sport activities.

When can my child return to sport?

It is very important that your child does not go back to full participation in sport if they have any remaining concussion signs or symptoms. Returning too soon before full recovery from concussion puts your child at higher risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be more severe and last longer. Return to sport and physical activity must follow a step-wise approach.

In the Return-to-Sport Strategy:

- Each stage is at least 24 hours.

- Your child moves on to the next stage when they can tolerate activities.
- If any of your child's symptoms worsen more than mildly and briefly, they should stop and try again the next day at the same step.
- According to Hockey Canada's Concussion Protocol, if the player experiences concussion symptoms after medical clearance (i.e., during steps 4 to 6), they should return to step 3 to establish full resolution of symptoms. Medical clearance will be required again before progressing to step 4.

Step 1: Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24 to 48 hours). Your child can start with daily living activities such as moving around the house, light walking and social interactions (e.g., talking with friends or family). Minimize screen time.

Step 2: Light to moderate effort aerobic exercise

2A: Start with light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling at a slow to medium pace. May begin light resistance training that does not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms.

2B: Gradually increase the intensity of aerobic exercise to moderate effort, such as stationary cycling or walking at a brisk pace. Moderate effort means the activity may cause faster breathing and heart rate, but not enough to prevent you from being able to talk comfortably.

Step 3: Individual sport-specific activities, without risk of inadvertent head impact. Add sport-specific activities (e.g., running, skating, shooting a puck) that can be done individually (away from other participants) in a low-risk environment. Activities should be supervised by a coach, trainer, teacher or parent/caregiver. Continue progressing at this step until symptom-free, even when exercising.

Medical clearance is required before step 4.

Step 4: Training drills and activities with no contact (e.g., no checking). Progress to usual

intensity exercise and add in more challenging drills such as passing drills. Participate in multi-athlete training and non-contact practices.

Step 5: Return to non-competitive activities, full-contact practice and physical education activities. Progress to typical physical activities, except for competitive gameplay. Restore confidence and skills.

Step 6: Return to sport and physical activity without restriction.

How can I help my child prevent concussion?

Ensure that your child is educated on concussion and follows the 12 on-ice tips for concussion prevention. Emphasize to your child how important it is to follow the rules, especially ones in place to reduce head contact.

Help your child make sure they have all the necessary, properly fitting equipment. Their skates need to fit properly and be in good condition, to prevent falls and crashes. **Helmets do not prevent concussions**, but your child should always wear their helmet properly to prevent other head injuries. **Mouthguards have not been proven to prevent concussions**, but your child should wear a properly fitted mouthguard to protect their mouth and teeth.



Media Resources



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE



This guide will help hockey leagues, coaches, teams, communities and partners use social media to support and promote Parachute Smart Hockey.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for all hockey leagues, coaches, teams, community leaders and partners who use social media tools or online communication media, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- X
- Bluesky
- Instagram
- Blogs

Use hashtags!

Use hashtags in all social media channels to gain momentum and build a community of support.

- Primary Hashtag: **#PlaySmartHockey**
- Secondary Hashtag: **#ConcussionEd**

You can also add your own hashtags, but we encourage you to use **#PlaySmartHockey** in all posts.

How do we engage?

Follow us and comment, share, like and re-post relevant content. We'll be doing the same for **#PlaySmartHockey!**

Be sure to tag **@ParachuteCanada** in all your Smart Hockey posts so we can see what your league is doing!

@parachutecanada

www.facebook.com/parachutecanada

www.instagram.com/parachutecanada

www.linkedin.com/company/parachute---leaders-in-injury-prevention

Key messages

Here are key messages everyone can share to let others know what Smart Hockey is all about:

- Safety in hockey is a shared responsibility. That's why we encourage everyone in the hockey community to make the pledge to play smart hockey.
- It's for the love of the game. The Smart Hockey program provides families, players and coaches with the tools they need to prevent, recognize and manage concussions, to ensure that everyone can enjoy hockey for life.
- It's up to each of us. Because concussions and other serious injuries can occur during play, learn what you can do to help keep players safe while having fun.
- It all starts with a commitment. Education and action will change the game when it comes to concussion in hockey.



Parachute is Canada's
leading national charity
dedicated to injury prevention.

parachute.ca

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE



Sample social media posts

Below are sample posts you can use on your social media channels, such as X, Bluesky, Facebook, Mastodon, LinkedIn and Instagram. You are also welcome and encouraged to come up with your own posts and messages that make most sense for your league, team and hockey community!

Remember that posts on X can only be up to 280 characters in length (including links); for Bluesky it's 300 characters.

If you want to show that you are part of a Smart Hockey team and/or league, post:

- I am proud to be on a team that plays SmartHockey. Encourage your team to take the #PlaySmartHockey pledge this season. Visit parachute.ca/smarthockey to learn more! #ConcussionEd
- There is nothing more important than player safety. Prioritize concussion education and ensure your team can enjoy hockey for life. #PlaySmartHockey #ConcussionEd parachute.ca/smarthockey
- Our team prioritizes concussion education and player safety. #PlaySmartHockey #ConcussionEd parachute.ca/smarthockey *With your team's and parents' permission, include a photo of your team holding a We#PlaySmartHockey sign.
- I #PlaySmartHockey because I respect myself, my teammates, and the game of hockey. Visit parachute.ca/smarthockey to get involved! #ConcussionEd
- I #PlaySmartHockey because I want to prevent concussions and enjoy hockey for life. Visit parachute.ca/smarthockey to get involved! #ConcussionEd

If you want to show people where to learn more about Smart Hockey and encourage them to be a Smart Hockey team, post:

- Use Parachute Smart Hockey resources to learn how to prevent, recognize and manage concussion. We Play Safe. We #PlaySmartHockey. parachute.ca/smarthockey #ConcussionEd
- Does your child's hockey team play Smart Hockey? Share this kit from parachute.ca/smarthockey to raise awareness about player safety and concussion prevention and share how they #PlaySmartHockey. #ConcussionEd
- Encourage your child and their team to join the #PlaySmartHockey program: check out the resources at parachute.ca/smarthockey. #ConcussionEd
- Hockey season is back! Learn how you can keep yourself and your teammates safe from concussion this season at www.parachute.ca/smarthockey #PlaySmartHockey #ConcussionEd
- #PlaySmartHockey this season. Avoid hitting to the head or hitting from behind. To learn more about concussion prevention, visit parachute.ca/smarthockey #ConcussionEd

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE



If you want to raise awareness about concussion and the importance of concussion education, prevention and management, post:

- Did you know? Continuing practice or gameplay after a concussion or returning before you are ready increases your risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms and serious injury. Do not play through the pain. We #PlaySmartHockey #ConcussionEd
- A concussion is a serious brain injury. Visit parachute.ca/concussion learn more about how to protect yourselves and others from concussion. #ConcussionEd
- 1 in 4 Canadians do not know how concussion is treated. Visit parachute.ca/smarthockey to ensure you know what to do if you, your players, or someone you know suffers a concussion while on the ice. #ConcussionEd #PlaySmartHockey
- Helmets are important but they don't prevent concussion. Learn about ways you can prevent concussion this hockey season at parachute.ca/smarthockey #PlaySmartHockey #ConcussionEd
- Only 4 in 10 Canadians are aware of the concussion resources and tools available to them. Download the #ConcussionEd app and visit parachute.ca/concussion to have these tools available at your fingertips. #PlaySmartHockey

Other content ideas

- Quotes from officials, coaches, trainers and safety personnel at your local hockey league and/or association
- Quotes from players
- Share tips from the 12 on-ice tips provided in this kit
- Photos holding a We Play Smart Hockey sign, available for download at parachute.ca/smarthockey
- Any great practice or game shots showing #PlaySmartHockey style to accompany the tweets and posts above.
- Same thing with photos from around your arena: the dressing room, the stands, the rink, the exterior. Get creative!
- Visit @ParachuteCanada for more info & tips: parachute.ca/smarthockey.



Ask our advice

If you have any questions or need some guidance, please feel free to contact Parachute's social media team at socialmedia@parachute.ca



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WE PLAY SMART HOCKEY SIGN



The We Play Smart Hockey sign is provided for your team to create a photo together to demonstrate your collective commitment to playing Smart Hockey.

At the end of this document you will find 18 letters. Line up all your players for a team photo and have them each hold a letter (with appropriate spacing to form words) to spell out **We #PlaySmartHockey**

- After completing your pre-season concussion education meeting, line your team up and to take this photo where you create the “We Play Smart Hockey” sign, letter by letter.
- With parents’ permission, post this picture to your league and/or team’s website or your social media channels to show that your team plays Smart Hockey and supports concussion education and player safety.
- If your team does a newsletter or hangs up team photos in your arena, be sure to include your Smart Hockey photos.

Refer to our Smart Hockey Social Media Guide for more tips and information. Make sure you tag **@ParachuteCanada** in all your posts so we can see and share how you **#PlaySmartHockey**.





Parachute

**Smart
Hockey**

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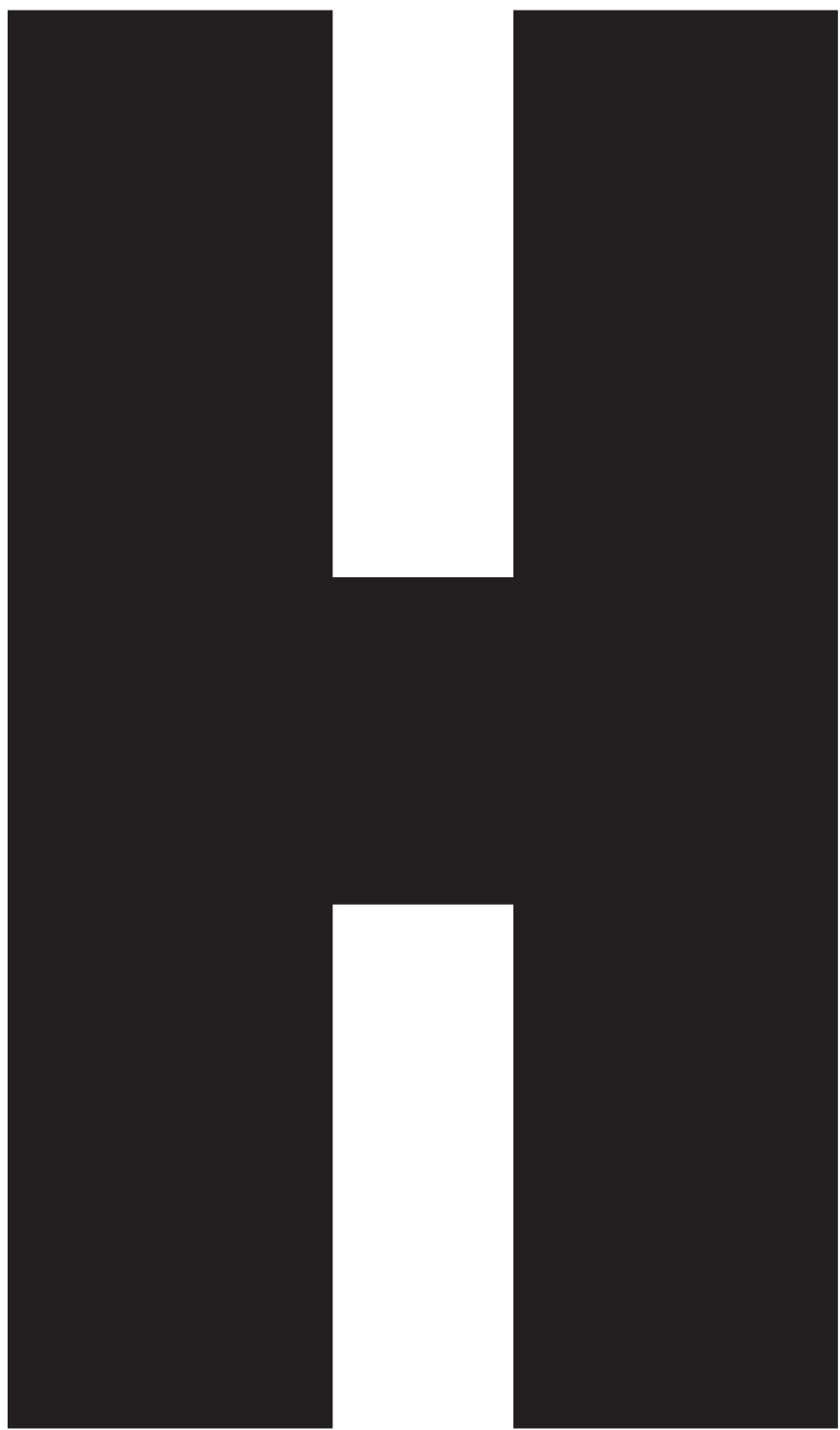




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