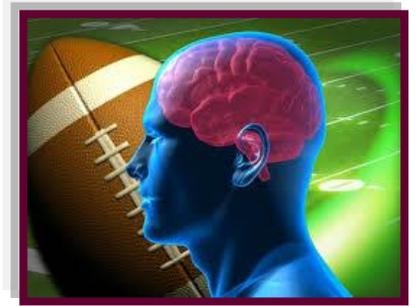


# Sports Concussion Care

Prevention \* Education & Awareness \* Baseline Testing  
Clinical Care \* Return to Activity



## What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a blow to the head or body. Concussions can occur from direct or indirect contact.
- Change the way your brain usually works.
- Is different for every person.
- Symptoms can range from mild to severe.
- Can occur in ANY sport or daily activities.
- **Can occur even if you do not lose consciousness.**

## What are concussion signs & symptoms?

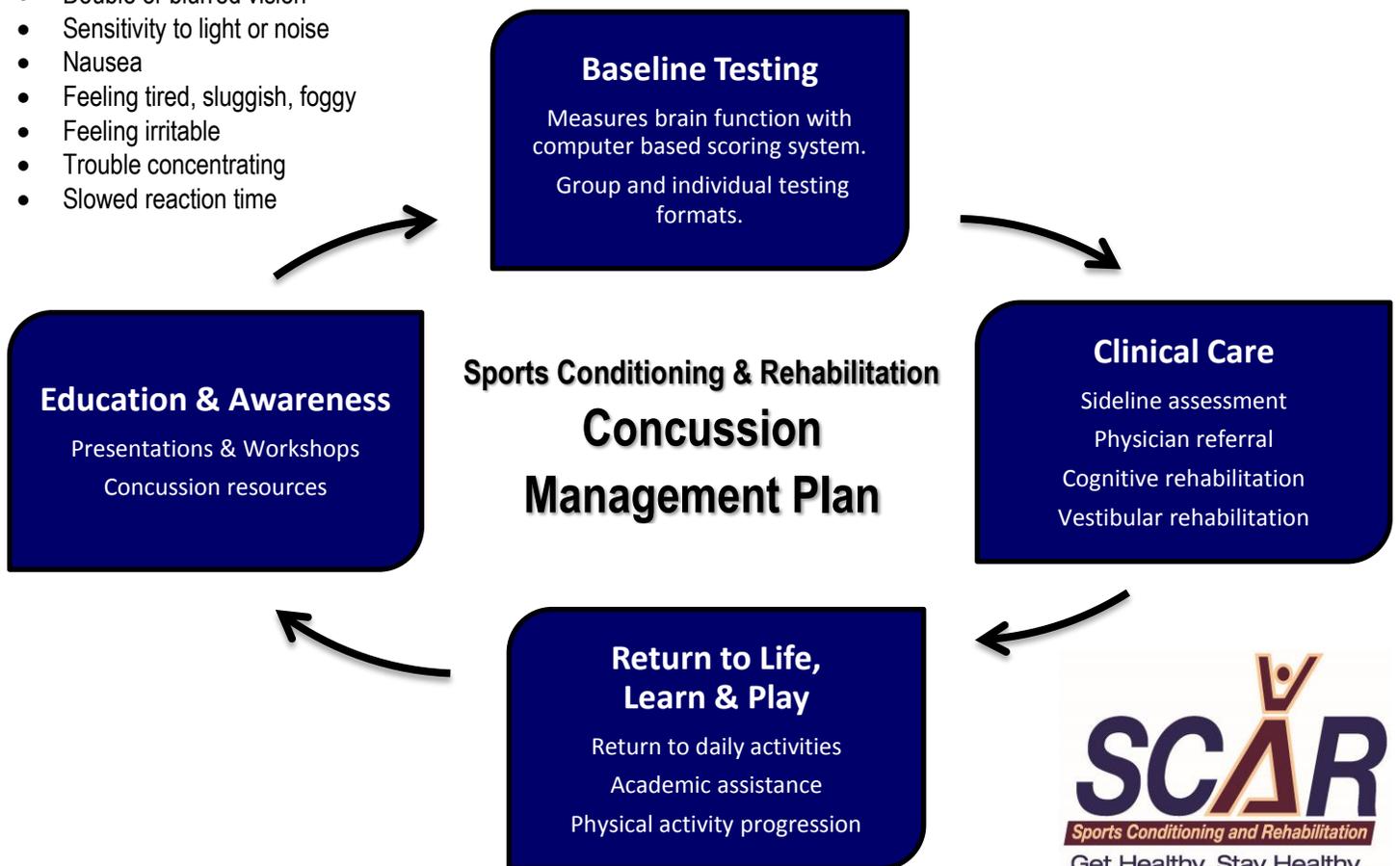
You can't see a concussion, but you may notice signs & symptoms right away; however, some symptoms may appear hours or even days after an injury. **Concussion signs & symptoms include:**

- Headache
- Memory loss
- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Nausea
- Feeling tired, sluggish, foggy
- Feeling irritable
- Trouble concentrating
- Slowed reaction time

## How to prevent a concussion?

Below are basic steps to take to protect you from a concussion:

- **Improve field awareness.** Keep your head on a swivel and know your surroundings. Know who's around you and brace yourself for contact.
- **Hit with proper technique.** Keep chin and eyes up with contact. If you have any questions on hitting technique don't hesitate to talk to your coach.
- **Do not spear.** Spearing is when a player initiates contact with the head or helmet.
- **Increase neck strength.**
- **Improve conditioning.** Proper conditioning prevents fatigue onset which leads to poor technique, field awareness and performance.
- **Proper fitting equipment.** Sporting equipment such as helmets and mouth guards are used to protect against head, facial and mouth injuries. Helmets should be sized appropriately, worn with all straps correctly fastened and all padding in the proper position. Mouth guards should be molded or custom fitted.



# Concussion Management Protocol

Concussions and other brain injuries can be serious and potentially life threatening injuries in sports. Research indicates that these injuries can also have serious consequences later in life if not managed properly. In an effort to effectively manage student-athletes who have sustained a concussion, protocols like the one below are being implemented in High Schools across the country.



## Step 1: See your Athletic Trainer

If a concussion is suspected the student-athlete should first be evaluated by the school athletic trainer. If the athletic trainer is not present; the coach should assess severity, refer the athlete to a SCAR Athletic Trainer or Physician. If an injury occurs off campus the student-athlete will also have **same day access to a SCAR athletic trainer** for a sports concussion assessment and will be referred to a local physician (sports concussion specialist) within a 24 to 48 window.

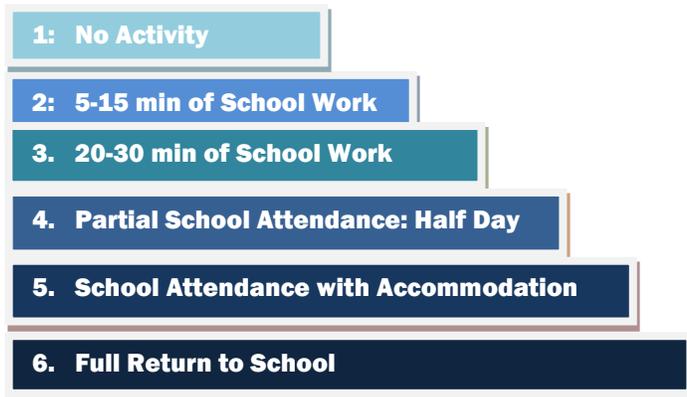
**\*\*\* If the condition appears severe or life threatening call 911.**

## Step 2: Physician Referral

Student-athletes with concussive symptoms or a head injury will be referred and evaluated by a licensed physician (MD or DO), trained in the evaluation and management of concussions. The state of California and CIF require written clearance prior to returning to activity.

## Step 3: Recover & Return to Learn

Like any injury, the brain needs time to recover and return to normal. Student-athletes should limit television, video games, phone and computer use at home for the first 72 hours or until symptom free. Student-athletes should avoid daily activities that provoke symptoms. As symptoms improve the student-athlete may begin the return to learn progression listed below.



## Step 4: Return to Play

Once a student-athlete is cleared by their physician they will begin the Gradual Return to Play Protocol listed below. If a student-athlete at any time becomes symptomatic they will return to step one in the Gradual Return to Play Protocol.

