

CONCUSSIONS

101

A “ding” vs. a concussion?

- A “ding” is when an athlete is in a stunned confusional state from a hit to the head. Even though this state of confusion does not last long, more than likely it is considered to be a concussion. ¹
- *DO NOT use “ding” to describe a concussion because it downgrades the seriousness of the injury.* ¹
- As defined by the NATA a “concussion is a clinical syndrome characterized by immediate and transient impairment of neural functions, such as alteration of consciousness, disturbance of vision, equilibrium, etc, due to mechanical forces.” ¹

Signs and symptoms of a concussion ²

- Headache, ringing in the ears
- Nausea/vomiting
- Balance problems
- Loss of consciousness or disorientation
- Memory difficulty (short/long term memory)
- Concentration difficulties, confusion, delayed responses
- Vision changes (double vision, blurry, sensitive to light)

If you think you have a concussion: ¹

- Report signs/symptoms to a certified athletic trainer (ATC) so that he/she can monitor you.
- Refrain from using any pain medication and alcohol.
- Rest but continue normal activities of daily living as you can (without signs/symptoms worsening).
- Have a responsible individual track your signs and symptoms throughout the night until you return to ATC.
- Follow other verbal/written orders given. Do not return to play with signs/symptoms or without permission.

Second Impact Syndrome is...

- Second impact syndrome is where “a second impact with potentially catastrophic consequences occurs prior to the full recovery after a first insult.” ²
 - Risks of second impact syndrome include:
 - Severe cognitive compromise ²
 - Death ²
 - Seizures ²
 - Cervical spine injuries ²
 - Skull fractures ²
 - and/or intracranial bleeding ²
- Returning to play too soon and multiple or severe concussions put you at risk for second impact syndrome.
- Almost all reported cases are in young athletes, because of the damage to their maturing brains. ¹
- Misdiagnosis and ill management of a concussion may lead to long-term consequences or risk of death. ^{3,4}

Incidence:

- “An estimated 300,000 sport-related traumatic brain injuries, predominantly concussions, occur annually in the United States.” ^{5,6}
- “The number of student-athletes sustaining concussions may similarly increase (like athletic participation) unless preventive measures continue to progress.” ⁵

Preventative measures: ¹

- Equipment CANNOT prevent concussions but can reduce risk for head injuries if properly fit, as well as certified by the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE).
- Mouth guards are recommended to reduce risk or severity of the injury if properly fit.

Educating You In Hopes To Keep You And YOUR HEAD In The Game.

Student Researchers:

Kristin Sease, ATS
Lea Vandegrift, ATS

Contact Information:

Yvette Ingram, PhD, ATC
Lock Haven University
115 Health Professions Building
Lock Haven, PA 17745

Phone: 570-484-2098
Email: yingram@lhup.edu

Faculty Advisors:

Patricia Lally, PhD
Stephen Streater, PhD, ATC
Yvette Ingram, PhD, ATC



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