



# Head Injury/Concussion Policy

The Kingston United Soccer Club, Board of Directors and staff/coaches recognize that parents and athletes/soccer players register for soccer programs because they want to have fun in a safe environment. To instill a spirit of the game that supports a healthy, fun, and safe environment for youth participating in soccer programs. KUSC takes Risk Management seriously and adopts the following Codes of Conduct:

- [Fair Play Code for Team Officials](#)
- [Fair Play Code for Parents and Spectators](#)
- [Fair Play Code for Players](#)

It is important that staff, officials, parents/legal guardians, and the athlete understand the risk involved when participating in sport/soccer, and especially in the area of head trauma and concussion caused from involvement in KUSC soccer programs.

At point of registration parents/guardians are required to acknowledge/sign participation/check off waiver which addresses that they understand there is risk of injury when participating in sport.

In an effort to better manage and help members identify a possible head injury, it has become important to provide staff, coaches/officials, parents, and players with as much information as possible. Therefore, we provide information on how one should initially react to a head injury/concussion, and how to follow up responsibly.

KUSC first and foremost takes the position of:

***“If in doubt, sit them out!”***

This powerful statement leaves no room for contention or “fence sitting” when trying to determine what to do if a player is suspected of having a head injury. Coaches, parents, and athletes need to recognize this position and support it!

If a participant sustains a head injury or possible concussion, they are required to use the [FIFA SCAT 3 Tool](#). This world-renowned tool can be used pitch side for a preliminary non-medical assessment to help define if the injury is an emergency.

- In emergency situations, staff (coach) will immediately call 911 and notify parent/guardian. Call 911 immediately if the injured person has lost consciousness, has trouble breathing, or convulsing. (Anyone suspected of having a concussion should be seen by a doctor).
- The injured participant should not return to activities on the day of the injury. Only a medical professional can determine when the injured can return to regular activity. A written permission may be required before the injured participant is permitted to return to regular activity following the 6 step [Return to Play Policy](#)

- In nonemergency situations, staff (coach) will notify the parent/guardian
- Staff/coach/parent will complete a [KUSC Injury Report](#) in the event of an injury to the head and file with the Technical Director within 12 hours. Parents must be notified immediately and asked to sign/initial in the Injury Report
- Staff/coach will follow up with the parent/guardian within 24 hours of the injury and/or prior to the participant returning to participation with soccer club activities. Any participant with signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another body part with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works.

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*Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications. These include prolonged brain damage and death if the concussion is not recognized and managed properly.*

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In other words, even a “ding” or bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear.

Concussion should be suspected if one or more of the following visible cues, signs, symptoms, or errors in memory questions are present:

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|------------------------------------|---|
| • Headaches                        | • “don’t feel right”  |
| • Feeling of pressure in the head  | • Fatigue or low energy   |
| • Nausea or vomiting               | • Sadness   |
| • Neck pain                        | • Nervousness or anxiety  |
| • Balance problems or dizziness    | • Irritability  |
| • Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision | • More emotional  |
| • Sensitivity to light or noise    | • Confusion   |
| • Feeling sluggish or slowed down  | • Concentration or memory problems (e.g. forgetting game plays) |
| • Feeling foggy or groggy          | • Repeating the same questions/comment                          |
| • Drowsiness                       |   |
| • Change in sleep patterns         |   |
| • Amnesia                          |   |

Visible clues of suspected concussion

- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Lying motionless on ground/slow to get up

- Unsteady on feet/balance problems or falling over/incoordination
- Grabbing/clutching of head
- Dazed, blank, or vacant look
- Confused/not aware of plays or events

Resources

[ThinkFirst Canada](#)

[OSA website – Holland Bloorview Concussion Resources](#)

Additionally, access to resources for staff/coach/parent/athlete are on the KUSC website (Coach packages will contain KUSC policy on Head Injury and Concussion)