



LOUDOUN FREEDOM Concussion Policy

Sports-related concussions in sports can be serious or even life-threatening situations. They are extremely dangerous and can affect a person's future regardless of whether she participates in sports. The Loudoun Freedom takes very seriously any hit or injury to a player's head that could result in a concussion. Coaches, parents, and players should follow these guidelines in order to recognize and manage a suspected concussion, and to help a player return to play safely:

- All coaches are required to take the following NFHS course:
<http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>
- Concussion Symptoms: Potential symptoms resulting from any hit to the head may include dizziness, disorientation, headache, nausea, balance issues, vision issues, etc. If a player exhibits any apparent symptoms, she will not go back into the game. Coaches will always err on the side of caution.
- Symptoms often do not reveal themselves until 24 hours after an incident so do not assume that the player is fine if symptoms do not appear immediately. A player should not take Advil-type products; they mask the real symptoms.
- If a player does exhibit symptoms of a concussion, the coach should recommend the player sees a physician. The Freedom will also refer families to the concussion center/clinic in Loudoun.
- Players will not be allowed to resume practice or play in a game until they are symptom free for **5 days** or **cleared by a doctor**. Any re-occurrence of a symptom would re-start the 5-day count. High schools follow this rule as well.
- It is typically the second hit that causes key damage to the brain. This makes it even more vital that a player not return to practice or a game and risk further damage until cleared to return.
- Coaches should be not put in position to decide whether a player is ready to practice or play again. If a player has suffered a concussion, returning to play will require a doctor's note clearing her. Even then, players should be handled with care.