



## Princeton University Athletic Medicine (PUAM) Concussion Information Sheet



### What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head or caused by the head striking something else such as the ground. A concussion typically causes the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of brain function that resolves spontaneously with time. However, occasionally there can be a more significant problem, and it is important that symptoms from every concussion are monitored by your athletic trainers (AT) and team physicians. Concussions usually do not cause structural damage to the brain. A concussion can occur whether or not a person is “knocked out.” When you suffer a concussion, you may have problems with concentration and memory, notice an inability to focus, feel fatigued, have a headache or feel nauseated. Bright lights and loud noises may bother you. You may feel irritable, be more emotional or have other symptoms. It may be difficult to study, attend class, or use the computer. The [PUAM Concussion Management Policy](#) can be reviewed for more details.

### What should I watch for?

After evaluation by your athletic trainer / team physician, it may be determined that you are safe to go home. Otherwise, you may be sent to the UHS infirmary, or to the hospital. If you are sent home, you should have a responsible adult available, follow the instructions below and follow up as recommended. The initial treatment of concussion is both relative physical and cognitive rest, so avoiding texting, video games, homework and/or excessive computer use is important. Symptoms from your concussion may persist when you are sent home but should not worsen nor should new symptoms develop. You should watch for symptoms including:

- Increasing headache
- Increasing nausea or vomiting
- Increasing confusion
- Garbled speech
- Unusual sleepiness or difficulty being awakened
- Trouble using your arms or legs
- Convulsions or seizure

If you notice any of these problems or have significant worsening of symptoms, immediately call public safety (609)-258-3333 or call 911 for an emergency. If you are off campus, dial 911. Please notify your AT and/or team physician as soon as possible.

### Is it okay to go to sleep?

Sleep is an important part of the healing process, so you should get plenty of rest after a concussion. Concussion can often cause drowsiness or increased tiredness, or difficulty sleeping. Keep a consistent sleep schedule, have a bedtime routine that helps you relax, and avoid electronics right before bed. If possible, have a responsible adult available to you in case any problems arise.

### Do I need a CT scan or MRI examination?

It depends on your injury and symptoms. If after evaluation you are sent to the hospital with a concern for a more complicated injury (e.g. skull fracture, or intracranial bleeding) a CT scan or MRI examination may be considered. If your symptoms linger for several days these tests may be considered.

### May I take something for pain?

We do not advise taking anything stronger than Tylenol and ask you to avoid aspirin, Ibuprofen (Advil), Naproxen (Aleve), or other anti-inflammatories that you may have been taking. We also ask that you avoid alcohol and caffeine and any other stimulants or supplements. The team physician will determine when you can restart medications and supplements.

### May I eat after the practice or game?

It is fine for you to eat when you are hungry. Remember, some athletes experience nausea and fatigue, and often find that their appetite is decreased immediately after a concussion.

### How long will I be observed?

You will be asked to follow up in the training room after your concussion. You will be assessed by the AT / team physician, and if necessary, consultants. The AT staff will follow up with you daily (as able), and the team physician will see you initially, and at several intervals along the return to play protocol (See Below). Your symptoms, difficulty with academics, and physical examination will be assessed and monitored.

**When can I return to class / schoolwork?: “Return to Learn”:** You should refrain from any significant cognitive work as well as physical exertion until released to do so by the medical staff. Initial cognitive rest includes avoiding texting, video games and excessive computer work as well as homework and/or class activities. Depending on your injury, you can consider trying to work or focus for short periods of time and attending class. The increase in cognitive load should be progressive and individualized. Modifications to school activities will be determined by the team physician in conjunction with your Dean of College and/or Dean for Studies, as necessary.

**Who should I contact if I’ve been diagnosed with a concussion? What other support is available?**

- Contact the Dean or Assistant Dean for Studies in your residential college by email.
- Copy your evaluating physician on the e-mail as well as the Associate Dean of the College, James Alexander (Alec) Dun: [jamesdun@princeton.edu](mailto:jamesdun@princeton.edu). Inform your Dean / Assistant Dean that you have been diagnosed with a concussion, want them to be aware of your situation, and may need time to recover.

**What steps are necessary to be considered for post-concussive academic support?**

You have options for receiving additional support: (1) short-term adjustments or (2) extended accommodations through the Office of Disability Services (ODS). These options usually involve disclosing some information about your medical condition to University offices and/or personnel.

- **For short-term adjustments:** If you need a short-term adjustment in your academic course work (e.g., an extension on a paper or test), your Dean or Assistant Dean will help you manage your course load and assist you in communicating with your instructors.
- **For extended accommodations:** Depending on the severity of your injury, you may be eligible for additional support and/or accommodations (e.g., help with note-taking or test accommodations) via the ODS. Your Dean / Assistant Dean can help you explore this option and should be contacted prior to contacting ODS directly ([ods@princeton.edu](mailto:ods@princeton.edu) or 609-258-8840).

**When can I “Return to Play (RTP)”:** You should refrain from any physical exertion including strength conditioning until released to do so by the medical staff. Additional neuropsychological testing will be performed prior to return to full activity. **The RTP decision is an individualized one made by the team physician**, which incorporates a progressive increase in both the level of exertion as well as intensity of activity and takes into account individual modifiers (e.g. history of concussion, headaches, learning disability, mood disorder). This typically includes a period of rest followed by light exertion, sport-specific activities, practice and finally full play all under the guidance of your AT and team physician. You will be followed by your AT and team physician regularly and will be evaluated by the team physician prior to full clearance. Please refer to the [PUAM Concussion Management Policy](#) for additional details.

**Important Contact Information:  
EMERGENCY: Call 911**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Daytime Phone Number</u>	<u>Evening and Weekend Number (McCosh Infirmary)</u>	<u>Email</u>
Caldwell Athletic Training Room	609-258-3527		
Dr. Sasha Steinlight	609-258-9801	609-258-3139	<a href="mailto:ssteinli@princeton.edu">ssteinli@princeton.edu</a>
Emily Dorman Head AT	609-258-3527	609-258-3139	<a href="mailto:ed0507@princeton.edu">ed0507@princeton.edu</a>

**Important Academic Contact Information:**

<u>College</u>	<u>Butler</u>	<u>Forbes</u>	<u>Mathey</u>	<u>Rockefeller</u>	<u>Whitman</u>	<u>New College West</u>	<u>Yeh</u>
<b>Dean of College</b>	Rashida Andrews <a href="mailto:rashida@princeton.edu">rashida@princeton.edu</a>	Patrick Caddeau <a href="mailto:caddeau@princeton.edu">caddeau@princeton.edu</a>	Michael Olin <a href="mailto:molin@princeton.edu">molin@princeton.edu</a>	Justine Levine <a href="mailto:justinel@princeton.edu">justinel@princeton.edu</a>	Jaclyn Schwalm <a href="mailto:jschwalm@princeton.edu">jschwalm@princeton.edu</a>	Anne Caswell-Klein <a href="mailto:acaswell@princeton.edu">acaswell@princeton.edu</a>	Alexis Andres <a href="mailto:aandres@princeton.edu">aandres@princeton.edu</a>

<b>Contact Number</b>	609-258-4954	609-258-5229	609-258-3317	609-258-7245	609-258-8093	609-258-6496	609-258-2248
<b>Dean for Studies</b>	Matthew Lazen mlazen@	Fang Du fd6521@	Natalia Cordova Sanchez ncordova@	Nicholas Tippenhauer nrt@	Matt Newman matt.newman@	Johanna Rossi Wagner jrwagner@	Junhow Wei junhow@
<b>Contact Number</b>	609-258-7140	609-258-7193	609-258-7223	609-258-5313	609-258-8525	609-258-1929	609-258-2257

**I have been provided with the above information, and will follow up as recommended on:** \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name

Signature of Student Athlete

Date

SS 8/2023