

What you need to know about Concussions

A concussion, or mild traumatic brain injury, is an invisible injury caused by a blow to the head. For example concussions can occur from violence, a fall, a car accident, or an injury sustained during contact sports. A concussion may or may not cause loss of consciousness, but it does disrupt the way the brain normally works and may cause physical, mental, and emotional symptoms.

Physical Symptoms

Headaches
Dizziness or balance problems
Nausea and vomiting
Fatigue or disrupted sleep
Sensitivity to light and sound

Mental Symptoms

Difficulty concentrating or focusing
Disrupted memory
Delayed processing time
Mental foginess

Emotional Symptoms

Emotional sensitivity
Irritability
Sadness
Nervousness

How does a concussion impact a student at school?

The concussed brain requires both [mental and physical rest](#) to recover from the injury. The doctor may recommend the following.

- The student may be absent from school or attend only half-day for a period of time. Schoolwork demands focus, memory, and concentration. Decreasing this mental activity will help the brain heal.
- The students should avoid prolonged activities that are mentally demanding. This may include reading, schoolwork, using the computer, video games, or text messaging. All of these activities force the brain to work harder to process information and can slow the recovery process.
- The student may not participate in any physical activity until cleared by a physician. This includes gym class, weightlifting, and sports activities.

Why is an understanding of concussions important?

Teachers are used to hearing excuses for why classwork or homework is not finished, and therefore, may be skeptical about decreased attendance or completed work. Because a concussion is an invisible injury, it may be difficult to understand why a particular student is still complaining of symptoms and taking so long to heal.

Healing times vary. Some people feel normal again in a few hours. Others have symptoms for weeks or months. It is very important to allow students time to get better and to [slowly return to regular activities](#). If symptoms come back during an activity, the student needs to stop and rest for a day. This is a sign the student may be over exerting himself.

For more information

https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion_fact_sheet_for_schools.pdf