Junior Premier League USA

Concussion Instructions and Policy

Utah Code Ann. § 26-53-201 requires all amateur sports organizations to adopt and enforce a concussion head injury policy. This policy will ensure the consistent and uniform implementation of a well-established concussion management program and return-to-play guidelines for the Junior Premier League USA.

**Concussion Information**

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 ab low to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. Concussions can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and my result in complications, including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a “ding” or a “bump” on the head can be serious. You cannot see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If a youth athlete reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Signs and Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

* Headaches
* Pressure in the head
* Nausea or vomiting
* Neck pain
* Balance problems or dizziness
* Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision
* Sensitivity to light or nose
* Feeling sluggish or slowed down
* Feeling foggy or groggy
* Drowsiness
* Change in sleep patterns
* Amnesia
* Just not “feeling right”
* Fatigue or low energy
* Sadness
* Nervousness or anxiety
* Irritability
* Confusion, or concentration or memory problems
* Repeating the same question/comment

Signs and Symptoms observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

* Appears dazed
* Vacant facial expression
* Confused about assignment
* Forgets plays
* Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
* Moves clumsily or displays incoordination
* Answers questions slowly
* Slurred speech
* Shows behavior or personality changes
* Can’t recall events prior to hit
* Can’t recall events after hit
* Seizures or convulsions
* Any change in typical behavior or personality
* Loses consciousness

**What to do if someone is suspected to have sustained a concussion:**

* Notify a coach, parent/legal guardian, responsible adult if it is suspected someone is experiencing signs or symptoms of a concussion. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head.
* If a concussion is suspected, then an evaluation by a medical professional is required. A qualified health care provider can diagnose a concussion and advise when following return-to-play guidelines is warranted.
* Rest. Players suffering from a concussion need time to allow the brain to heal properly. Young developing brains recovering from a current concussion are susceptible to sustaining a second concussion known as Second Impact Syndrome. This condition can cause permanent brain damage, or even death. It is important to rest until approval from a qualified health care provider is given before fully returning to activity.
* Do not take anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, or Motrin without the approval from a doctor. These medications thin the blood and can possibly cause more damage to a brain that has sustained a concussion.

**Possible consequences for returning a player to the field from a concussion too soon:**

Youth participants with the signs and symptoms of concussion must be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the youth participant suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents, and players is the key for a youth participant’s safety.

No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. ***A youth participant who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from the competition at that time and may not return to play until the youth participant is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, and has received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider.*** Remember, it is better to miss one game than miss the whole season. When in doubt, the youth participant sits out.

**Concussion Policy Action Plan**

The Junior Premier League USA (“***JPL***”) is defined as: JPL paid and volunteer administrative staff and coaches, all registered JPL players, JPL-affiliated clubs and members, JPL-affiliated independent teams, JPL-affiliated recreation programs.

JPL adopts these education and notification policies for the management of concussions:

* All coaches (paid and volunteer) are required to read and sign this Concussion Instructions and Policy form acknowledging that they have read and understand the information included in this form, have read the CDC concussion guidelines and completed the concussion training course for coaches found at [www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html) and completed the CDC concussion training certificate.
* Coaches shall educate their players on the signs and symptoms of concussions and encourage athletes to notify a coach if they or a teammate exhibits those signs or symptoms.
* All players and the parents/legal guardians of those players are required to sign and return an informed consent form relating to the nature and risk of concussions.
* Any player showing signs or symptoms of a concussion shall be immediately removed form participation/competition.
* JPL will not allow any athlete who has sustained or us suspected of sustaining a traumatic brain injury to return to play until JPL has received a JPL Concussion Clearance Form for that athlete bearing the signature of a qualified health care provider. A “qualified healthcare provider is someone who is licensed in the state of Utah under the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing Act and may evaluate and manage a concussion within the health care provider’s scope of practice, and has successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of a concussion within the past 3 years.