

OSSAA Contest Officials

Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussions

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to have suffered a concussion.

Common Symptoms of Concussions Can Include:

- Headache
- Fogginess
- Difficulty concentrating
- Easily confused
- Slowed thought process
- Difficulty with memory
- Nausea
- Lack of energy, tiredness
- Dizziness, poor balance
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light and sounds
- Mood changes—irritable, anxious, or tearful

An official that has observed **one or more** of the above symptoms in an athlete should:

- In compliance with the NFHS Concussion Rule found in each NFHS sport rule book---“Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.”
- As of July 1, 2010, Oklahoma Statute 24-155 of Title 70 further states that after the player has been removed from participation the player “may not participate until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and receives **written clearance** to return to participation from that health care provider.”
- **The NFHS rule does not require written clearance but Oklahoma Law does require written clearance.**

The official is **NOT** responsible for the **“written clearance”** that must be done to re-enter the contest. The decision for the athlete to re-enter the contest and the **“written clearance”** to document return to play is the responsibility of the acting **head coach**.

(The OSSAA **recommends** that all game officials view the free 20-minute video on concussions, “Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know”, located at the NFHS website, www.nfhslearn.com.)