Concussions

Concussion: A blow to the head. You do not have to be knocked unconscious to have a concussion. Symptoms can include amnesia, memory loss, difficulty concentrating, headache, light sensitivity, blurred vision, slurred speech and dizziness. Sometimes symptoms don’t show up until days after the original trauma. Watch out for sleep disruption, fatigue, depression and general “slowness.”

Treatment: Stop activity immediately and seek medical help. Do not return to the activity until all symptoms have subsided.

Head Injuries

Head injuries are among the most feared of all sports injuries. The vast majority are minor; however, the potential for serious injury is always present. The following recommendations can help prevent a seemingly minor injury from becoming a life-threatening one.

If any of the following symptoms are present 24 to 48 hours after a head injury, your child should be taken immediately to the emergency room:

- Severe headache, with deep throbbing
- Excessive sleepiness or grogginess
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Blurred or double vision
- Ringing of the ears (tinnitus)
- Dizziness or loss of coordination
- Temporary loss of memory/mental confusion or disorientation

These are symptoms of a severe head injury – call 911

- Loss of consciousness – “knocked out”
- Slurred speech
- Numbness or paralysis (partial or complete)
- Convulsions or tremors

If your child suffers a head injury, even a seemingly minor one, follow these guidelines for management:

- Check breathing rate, heart rate, skin color and other symptoms every two hours. Parents should always follow directions from the child’s pediatrician. Current guidelines say that children with concussions should be awakened once or twice during the night.
- Limit food consumption to clear liquids for 2-4 hours following the injury.
- If there is any question about your child’s well-being, seek medical attention immediately.

For more information, visit:

- American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
  www.amssm.org
- American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine
  www.sportsmed.org
- Kids Health for Parents
  www.kidshealth.org