



Kingsley Junior Football Club (inc)

CONCUSSION POLICY

As a background to the policy the following information has been extracted from THE MANAGEMENT OF SPORT-RELATED CONCUSSION IN AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL Document.

Description

Concussion is caused by trauma to the brain, which can be either direct or indirect (e.g. whiplash injury). When the forces transmitted to the brain are high enough, they can "stun" the nerves and affect the way in which the brain functions. This results in a range of symptoms and signs depending on the area of the brain that is affected. Common symptoms of concussion include headache, blurred vision, dizziness, nausea, balance problems, fatigue and feeling "not quite right". Other common features of concussion include confusion, memory loss and reduced ability to think clearly and process information. Loss of consciousness is seen in only 10-20% of cases of concussion in Australian football. That is, the footballer does not have to lose consciousness to have a concussion.

Likelihood

Concussion is a relatively common injury in Australian football. The overall incidence rate is 5-6 concussions per 1000 player hours, which equates to an average of 6-7 injuries per team per season.

Potential Complications

Several complications can occur following concussion. These include:

- Higher risk of injury or repeated concussion on return to play.
- Prolonged symptoms (lasting more than 14 days).
- Symptoms of depression and other psychological problems.
- Severe brain swelling (particularly in young players); and
- Long term damage to brain function.

In general, complications are not common. The risk of complications is thought to be increased by allowing a player to return to play before they have recovered. Therefore, it is important to recognise concussion, make the diagnosis and keep the player out of training and competition until the player has recovered.

Recognising the injury

Any one or more of the following visual clues can indicate a possible concussion:

- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Lying motionless on ground/Slow to get up



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- Unsteady on feet/Balance problems or falling over/Incoordination
- Grabbing/Clutching of head
- Dazed, blank, or vacant look
- Confused/Not aware of plays or events

Further indicators of a concussion injury can be found in the AFL's Match Day Head Injury Assessment Tool.

Policy

Because of the possible long-term health effects of a concussion injury, the following steps are mandatory when a concussion injury has been determined as likely:

1. The affected player will take no further part in the game, and a professional medical assessment of the injury should be sought as soon as possible after the incident.
2. The first aid officer will complete an "Injury Report Form" detailing the incident and injury and return it with the match paperwork.
3. A medical clearance from a qualified Doctor must be sighted by the President, Vice-President or Risk and Safety Officer of the KJFC Committee before the player can return to training.
4. The injured player will automatically need to follow the "Stages of Graded Return to Play" policy as per AFL guidelines. The earliest that the player may return to play (once they have completed a graded loading program and have obtained medical clearance) is on the 21st day following the concussion (where the day of concussion is designated day "0"). This means that a player who is concussed in a match on a Saturday will miss at least the next two Saturday matches and will only be able to return to play on the third Saturday (i.e. the 21st day after the concussion was sustained) if they have recovered according to the protocols and have been medically cleared to return to play.
5. If a player sustains a second concussion injury during the same season (or three concussions within the previous 12 months), the player should be reviewed by a doctor with expertise in the management of concussion (e.g. Sport and Exercise Physician, Neurologist, Rehabilitation Physician).
6. In the event a player has a third concussion, player welfare is a priority and they will no longer be able to train or be available for game selection for the remainder of the season.



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Mark Connick

President KJFC

Effective from 18th April 2024