I believe that sustained a concussion on .

 Student Name Date

To help ensure the above-named student recovers appropriately, please read this instruction sheet **completely** and **review** the symptoms below.

|  |
| --- |
| **If any of the following symptoms develop, call 9-1-1 or go to the emergency room immediately.** |
| **• Decreasing level of consciousness** | **• Seizures** | **• Increasing confusion** |
| **• Slurred speech or inability to speak** | **• Increasing irritability** | **• Inability to recognize people or places** |
| **• Numbness in arms or legs** | **• Worsening headache** | **• Pupils becoming unequal in size** |
| **• Neck pain** | **• Repeated vomiting** |  |

Otherwise, you can follow the instructions outlined below:

1. **Set up an appointment for a follow-up evaluation by a health care provider.** The athlete may **NOT** return to athletic activity until written clearance for participation is received from an appropriate healthcare provider.
	* Please refer to Post-Concussion Return to Sport Progression for a full return to participation plan.
2. Remain under the observation of a responsible adult for the first 24-hours. Being awakened while sleeping is **NOT** necessary or recommended, unless otherwise instructed.
3. Maintain a well-regulated schedule with normal wake/sleep times; avoid taking extra naps.
4. Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water and other liquids.
5. Avoid all moderate-to-high level physical activity. However, complete bed rest is not necessary. Low levels of physical exertion (such as light walking) are encouraged and regular daily activities should be resumed, as long as these do not cause an increase in symptoms.
6. Attendance at school is encouraged, based on severity of symptoms. Discuss with your healthcare provider.
7. While symptomatic, attendance at team practices/games is not recommended. This time should be spent focusing on recovering and catching up on studying/schoolwork.
8. **DO NOT**
	* Engage in anything that increases symptoms.
		+ Limit time spent watching TV, texting, and on the computer/phone/iPad.
		+ Avoid bright or flashing lights and loud noises.
	* Take any medications without permission from a licensed healthcare professional.
	* Operate a car, machinery, or other motorized vehicle.
	* Drink any alcohol.

Additional Instructions:

Recommendations provided by Black River Memorial Hospital’s Sports Medicine staff:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Dawn Jacobson, MA, LAT
 | *
 |

Signature: Date:

**Please call the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department at 715-284-1330 with any questions.**

**What is a concussion?**

A concussion is a brain injury that results in your brain not working as it should. Any blow to the head, face, neck, or body that causes a sudden shaking or jarring of the brain inside the skull may cause a concussion. You do not have to get hit in the head to have a concussion. For example, receiving a check in hockey or a hard hit in football that jars the head and neck can cause a concussion. Also, you do not need to lose consciousness to have a concussion. Only a small percentage of concussions result in loss of consciousness.

**What are the signs and symptoms?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Physical** | **Cognitive (Thinking)** |
| • Headache | • General confusion or fogginess |
| • Blurred vision | • Difficulty concentrating |
| • Nausea or vomiting | • Difficulty remembering |
| • Dizziness | **Emotional** |
| • Fatigue or low energy | • Irritability or sadness |
| • Balance problems | • Feeling nervous or worried |
| • Sensitivity to light or noise | • More emotional than usual |

**How long will symptoms last?**

The length of symptoms varies greatly between individuals. For some, symptoms may last less than 24 hours, while for others symptoms may last several weeks to months. It is important to know that even after the physical symptoms are gone, the brain is still healing. It usually takes at least 1-2 weeks once symptom-free before you are safe to return to full participation. That is why it is important to follow an appropriate Return to Play Protocol through a licensed healthcare professional.

**It’s an important game. Why can’t I just play through it?**

The short-term and long-term effects of continuing to participate can be devastating. Even just finishing the current event you are participating in puts you at risk. Do no wait until after a game or until the next day to tell someone you may have a concussion. You need to remove yourself from participation immediately and get checked out!

**Second Impact Syndrome**

The most serious risk of returning to play too soon is Second Impact Syndrome. Second Impact Syndrome is a severe condition that occurs when an athlete sustains a second blow to the head prior to the brain being fully recovered from the first concussion. Second Impact Syndrome is rare, but when it occurs, it is almost always fatal, resulting in death.

The long-term consequence of continuing to play through a concussion or returning too soon is **Post-Concussive Syndrome**. This results in long-term (often life-long) problems, such as:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| • Chronic headaches or migraines | • Intense anger and/or aggression |
| • Anxiety and irritability | • Personality changes |
| • Dizziness | • Inattention and lack of concentration |
| • Insomnia (inability to sleep) | • Sensitivity to noise and light |
| • Memory problems |  |

**Is it safe for me to continue to exercise, as long as I make sure to not hit my head?**

**NO.** All sports participation and moderate-high level physical activity should be discontinued while recovering from a concussion. The body needs to focus its energy on brain healing. Since exercise uses a lot of energy, it can slow down the recovery process. The most important treatment is physical and mental rest.