

Frequently Asked Questions – Concussion Protocols

Who tracks and maintains the Concussion Reports (Appendix 2)?

- This is up to the LMHA, but Hockey Canada suggests the Safety Person, Manager or the Trainer (if a team has one). Hockey Canada believes it is best to be held at the team level and monitored by the LMHA periodically.

Who signs the form (Appendix 2)?

- Same as above, Initializing should be done by the Safety Person, Manager or the Trainer. But prior to returning to play it is mandatory that the parent or guardian of the concussed player sign the document.

How long must the forms be kept?

- There is no criteria for maintaining or documenting of forms season to season. Hockey Canada suggests we may want to return the forms to the families at the end of the season, it then becomes the families' responsibility to keep records. The association can keep on file if they wish, once again this is up to the branch or the LMHA.

Do we need to send forms to Hockey Canada or Hockey Alberta?

- No, there is no requirement to submit forms to the governing bodies, and they do not foresee this becoming a requirement.

Define Physician?

- Physician is defined as a medical doctor, the 'Medical Clearance Note' **MUST come from a Medical Doctor** and CANNOT come from other practitioners such as Chiropractors, or Physiotherapists.

What if Associations are part of concussion protocol programs in and around the city such as Winsport, U of C and Peak Performance (Complete Concussion Management), do they need to cut ties with these programs?

- Return to play programs from concussion specialist programs are supported and associations are encouraged to maintain, with the Caveat being the **player must still receive clearance from a Medical Doctor (Physician) not the physio or chiro.**

What if a player with a 'Suspected Concussion' is removed from a game and has no issues on the next day? Must they follow the Protocol?

- Any player removed, suspected or otherwise MUST visit a Physician as soon as possible following being removed from a game. If at that time the Physician determines that no concussion occurred he/she can immediately sign a 'Medical Clearance Note' and return that player to play immediately.
- If the player has any symptoms at all, he/she must follow the 6 step process.



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Who can remove a player from a game? Can a spotter or the opposition ask for a player to be removed from a game?

- Once again there are no guidelines here and it is up to the LMHA. Hockey Canada suggests that it would be best to be determined by the bench staff (Coach, Safety Person, Trainer) to make this call. They do not recommend that opposition teams be able to make this decision.
- A parent in the stands has full responsibility of their child, and if a parent deems it appropriate for their child to be removed from the game then this should be permitted as it would in any dangerous situation that arose in a game.
- An on ice official may make a recommendation, but it would still be up to the bench staff of that team to make the final decision based on their knowledge of the player

Is 1 week the earliest return date from a concussion?

- Each concussion is different, but in order to follow the six step process properly as outlined you will require a minimum of 6-7 days.
- Remember this is about player safety and avoiding second impact concussions
- As per above if the player has a 'Suspected Concussion' and is removed, and the medical physician on the first visit determines that no concussion occurred, then that player can return to play immediately with a signed 'Medical Clearance Note'.

Must a 'Concussed Player' see a Medical Physician 2x throughout this process?

- Yes, at the very minimum, the first visit is immediately after the incident to confirm the diagnosis. The 2nd visit would be to get a 'Medical Clearance Note' prior to Step 5 and the return to 'Body Contact' drills
- Please note that it may be required to visit a medical physician more than 2x throughout the process dependent on the severity of the concussion.

How do we handle situations where the athlete is involved in other sporting programs, and is fulfilling requirements of return to play within their programs?

- Appendix 2 is a Hockey Canada Form and must be completed by members of our Associations. But if a partnering organization provides a note saying that the player fulfilled an activity (other than the Medical Clearance Note), then the association can attach and sign off on that activity.

PLEASE NOTE: These protocols have been developed with the goal of maintaining 'Player Safety', which is the top priority for Hockey Canada and its member associations. This is a minimum standard in addressing concussion injuries and it is expected that all governing bodies adhere to Hockey Canada's Return to Play Strategy. While this is a 'New Policy' it does not differ from guidelines that have been in place in recent years and Hockey Canada is hopeful that many of these steps are currently being followed.