Name: ______________________________ has been evaluated for concussion symptoms.

Date of evaluation: _______ Date/time of trauma causing symptoms: ____________________________
(Your child’s symptoms circled below)

**Definition of Sports Concussion:** A concussion (or mild traumatic brain injury MTBI) is a complex pathophysiologic process affecting the brain, induced by trauma (direct or indirect forces to the head). Disturbance of brain function is related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury. Concussion may or may not involve a loss of consciousness (LOC). Concussion results in a constellation of physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep-related symptoms. Symptoms may last from several minutes to days, weeks, months or even longer in some cases.

**Following these instructions after a concussion can prevent further injury and help recovery.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Sleep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>Visual Problems</td>
<td>Feeling mentally foggy</td>
<td>Irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea/Vomiting</td>
<td>Fatigue/ Feeling tired</td>
<td>Feeling slowed down</td>
<td>Sadness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td>Sensitivity to light or noise</td>
<td>Difficulty remembering</td>
<td>More emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Problems</td>
<td>Numbness/Tingling</td>
<td>Difficulty concentrating</td>
<td>Nervousness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Common Signs & Symptoms:** There are four types of concussion symptoms: physical, cognitive, emotional and sleep-related and it is common for a child or young adult with a concussion to have one or many of these symptoms.

**When to seek care urgently:** Seek care quickly IF symptoms worsen, there are any behavioral changes, OR any of the following serious symptoms develop:

| Headaches that worsen | Very drowsy, can't be awakened | Can't recognize people or places |
| Seizures | Repeated vomiting | Increasing confusion |
| Neck pain | Slurred speech | Weakness/numbness in arms/legs |
| Unusual behavior change | Significant irritability | Less responsive than usual |

*If you observe any of the above signs, call your doctor or visit the emergency department immediately.*

**Returning to Daily Activities, Do’s & Don’ts** The key to recovery is sleeping, resting physically and mentally, and avoiding activities that might cause another head injury.

**IT IS OK to:**
- Take pain medicine as prescribed by physician
- Use ice pack on head and neck for comfort
- Go to sleep
- Get quality rest, Take naps

**THERE IS NO need to:**
- Stay in bed
- Wake up every hour

**Do NOT**
- Drive while you have symptoms
- Exercise or lift weights
- Drink alcohol
- Participate in sports or high-risk activities

- **Avoid:**
  - Physical activities that produce concussion symptoms, as this might **prolong recovery time.**
  - Lengthy mental activities requiring concentration (ie. Homework, schoolwork, job-related work, texting, phone use, computer use, and extended video game playing) as these activities worsen symptoms and **prolong recovery.**
### Returning to School:
If symptoms are severe (cannot concentrate for more than 30-45 minutes), staying home may be indicated until symptoms improve. If symptoms are less severe, rest breaks during school can help recovery.

- Students who experience symptoms of concussion often need extra help to perform school-related activities and may not perform at their best on classroom or standardized tests until fully recovered.
- In addition to the Certified Athletic Trainer(s), Teacher(s), Health Room Aides, Public Health Nurse, counselor, and administrator(s) may be involved in the management during the recovery of your child/teenager’s injury and symptoms.
- As symptoms decrease, the extra supports (rest breaks during school) can be removed slowly.

### Parents & School Personnel:
Parents & School personnel should watch for indications of worsening symptoms, specifically:

- Increased problems paying attention, concentrating, remembering or learning new information
- Needing longer time to complete a task
- Increased irritability or less of an ability to cope with stress

### Returning to Sports and Recreation:
The injured athlete should NEVER return to sports or active recreation with ANY symptoms unless directed by a health professional. NO PE class, physical activity at recess, or sports practices or games.

- Inform the Physical Education teacher and all coaches of the injury and symptoms.
- Check in with the certified athletic trainer upon return to school.
- It is normal for the child/teenager to feel frustrated, sad, and even angry because they cannot return to sports or recreation right away. With any injury, a full recovery will lower the chances of getting hurt again. **It is better to miss one game than the whole season.**

### Stepwise Return to Activity/Play:
Once the athlete’s symptoms resolve at rest and the certified athletic trainer clears the athlete to return to activity, the athlete may SLOWLY increase activity under the certified athletic trainer’s direction. If symptoms return with increased activity, the athlete should reduce the level of activity.

**The athlete must be evaluated and cleared by the certified athletic trainer before returning to sports. Pay attention to symptoms.**

### Follow Up:
The athlete must be monitored by the school certified athletic trainer

- Parents should contact the certified athletic trainer if they have any questions regarding the concussion (or any other injury) their child has incurred. The certified athletic trainer may recommend they consult with their family physician or other medical specialist, although parents may consult with their family physician or other medical specialist at anytime. If the injured person has had significant or recurrent head injuries, or the symptoms above persist beyond 5-7 days, an evaluation with a specialist in concussion management may be recommended. Please contact the certified athletic trainer for further information.

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This document adapted with permission from:

Safe Concussion Outcome, Recovery & Education (SCORE) Program
Children's National Medical Center [www.childrensnational.org/score](http://www.childrensnational.org/score)

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