

GPS/ASC INJURY POLICY

Please seek medical attention if an injury results in a player temporarily discontinuing their participation. GPS/ASC recommends the players follow the advice of their physician. A player shall not participate in any practice, training, or games without written medical release by a duly licensed Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Osteopathy, Doctor of Chiropractic, duly licensed Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner. All medical releases shall be turned into the coach and the manager shall keep the release in the player documentation. Injured players are encouraged to continue to attend team events during their recovery.

Concussion Guidelines

This should be interpreted and included as part of an overall strategy that aims to educate players, coaches, athletic trainers and other soccer personnel and as part of the best management practices that are intended to minimize player risk for complications related to concussion, both short- and long-term and to maximize the length of playing time, both in-season and over a career. Complications from poorly managed sport-concussions within professional sports have been linked to significant functional limitations, increased risk of depression, early onset memory dysfunction, and litigation against pro team employers for negligent practices. This is a part of a full spectrum of care that includes preseason player education, baseline neurocognitive testing at appropriate intervals, requiring the athlete to complete a graduated series of exertional challenges and needing the athlete to be symptom free in all domains before being cleared to return to play.

It shall be the policy of GPS/ASC to require that all members, parents/legal guardians of youth players, along with all registered youth coaches be informed on the subject of concussive injury to players and to the best practices available for diagnosis and treatment for this potentially serious medical condition. This policy shall require all members to follow all Federal, State, and local legal requirements including, but not limited to, the removal from play of any player suspected to have had a head injury of any type. This policy will remain subservient to any and all future Federal, state, local laws and regulations as well as any established US Youth Soccer and/or the United States Soccer Federation policies.

GPS/ASC asks parents, coaches, volunteer and paid staff, and game officials to be vigilant in the area of player safety for all potentially serious types of injuries, including head, neck, and spine areas. Concussions, also referred to as traumatic brain injuries (TBI), are particularly significant during growth up to and during the teenage years. It shall be the policy of GPS/ASC to require that, at the time of registration, parents and legal guardians of each youth player are informed of the general signs and symptoms of potential concussive injury by visiting the CDC's concussion resource page on their website.

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/>

Further educational and other reference resources are available on the Iowa Soccer, US Youth Soccer, US Soccer Federation and CDC websites.

<http://www.iowasoccer.org/>

<http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

<http://www.ussoccer.com/about/recognize-to-recover>

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/>

Access to concussion awareness information will be made available to coaches, youth players' parents and guardians. GPS/ASC will inform their coaches of this policy.

COACHES

GPS/ASC requires all coaches to complete the CDC's online Heads Up concussion training program for coaches every two years. Access to this course is found on Iowa Soccer's website or by using the link below. After completing the test at the end of the program, please download the certificate, save it to a file and upload it into the provided portal on the risk management page– www.iowasoccer.org. One may also download other valuable information on this page which includes Fact Sheet for Coaches and a Clipboard Concussion Information sheet, both valuable resources for use.

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/coach.html>

PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS

GPS/ASC strongly encourages their member parents and legal guardians to take the CDC's online Heads Up concussion training program for parents.

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/parents.html>

PLAYERS

GPS/ASC strongly encourages their member players to take the CDC's online Heads Up concussion training program for athletes.

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/athletes.html>

PROTOCOL

During the course of a practice, game or tournament if a coach or referee suspects a concussion (any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body and/or complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion) the player must be pulled immediately from play. The player must be evaluated by a healthcare professional and written documentation from the health care professional must be presented to the coach stating the player is safe to return to soccer play.

TOURNAMENTS

As per US Soccer Federation recommendations, all "major youth tournaments" should have an adequate number of health care providers (HCP) present for and accessible to coaches, referees and athletes as needed during play. For this purpose, a "major youth tournament" is intended to mean:

- (1) A tournament played over multiple days,
- (2) Where age-group-based champions will be determined, and
- (3) In which 64 or more teams (excluding teams U10 and younger) are entered.

The HCP should be a licensed healthcare professional such as an athletic trainer certified (ATC), or a physician (MD/DO), with a skill set in emergency care and sports medicine injuries and with knowledge and experience related to concussion evaluation and management. Each “major youth tournament” hosting entity should collaborate and communicate with an HCP, if available, on an overall emergency action plan and discuss the management of environmental injuries, injury prevention, head injury management and return to play matters.

ASSESSING PLAYERS

Games where an HCP is Present: Where an HCP (Health Care Professional) is present at games, any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be evaluated on the sideline by the on-site HCP. The on-site HCP will perform SCAT3 or Child SCAT 3, (<http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/47/5/259.full.pdf+html>) as applicable, and modified BESS (<http://knowconcussion.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/BESS.pdf>) to evaluate players on the field/sideline.

Unless the on-site HCP determines that the player has not suffered a concussion, the player will not be permitted to return to play until the player has successfully completed the graduated RTP protocol described below and has been cleared to RTP by a physician.

(1) No coach shall permit a player who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment to RTP until cleared to do so by an on-site HCP.

(2) If a coach seeks to allow a player who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to RTP by the on-site HCP to re-enter the game, the referee shall allow the player to return to the field but shall:

(a) immediately stop play,

(b) direct the player to leave the field of play and

(c) direct the coach to remove the player and select a substitute.

(3) If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter the game who been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to RTP by the on-site HCP, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee shall be entitled to take such other disciplinary measures as are permitted.

Games and Practices Where No HCP is Present Where no HCP is present at a game or practice, any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be evaluated by an HCP before the player will be allowed to return to practice or play.

(1) No coach shall permit a player who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment to RTP until cleared to do so by an HCP.

(2) If a coach seeks to allow a player who been removed from a game for a concussion

assessment to re-enter the game, the referee shall allow the player to return to the field but shall:

- (a) immediately stop play,
- (b) direct the player to leave the field of play and
- (c) direct the coach to remove the player and select a substitute.

(3) If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter the game who been removed from a game for a concussion assessment, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee shall be entitled to take such other disciplinary measures as are permitted. Unless an HCP determines that the player has not suffered a concussion and clears the player to RTP, the player will not be permitted to return to practice or play until the player has successfully completed the graduated RTP protocol described below and has been cleared to RTP by a physician who is specifically trained in concussion management.