

IRB REGULATION 10

MEDICAL

(CONCUSSION)

**REGULATION 10****REGULATION 10. MEDICAL****10.1 Concussion¹**

10.1.1 A Player who has suffered concussion shall not participate in any Match or training session for a minimum period of three weeks from the time of injury, and may then only do so when symptom free and declared fit after proper medical examination. Such declaration must be recorded in a written report prepared by the person who carried out the medical examination of the Player.

10.1.2 Subject to sub-clause 10.3 below, the three week period may be reduced only if the Player is symptom free and declared fit to play after appropriate assessment by a properly qualified and recognised neurological specialist. Such declaration must be recorded in a written report prepared by the properly qualified and recognised neurological specialist who carried out the assessment of the Player.

10.1.3 In age grade rugby the three week minimum period shall be mandatory.

10.2 Local Anaesthetic

10.2.1 A player may not receive local anaesthetic on Match day unless it is for the suturing of bleeding wounds or for dental treatment administered by an appropriately qualified medical or dental practitioner.

¹ Concussion occurs when the brain is injured following a blow to the head or face. Concussion may occur without an apparent period of unconsciousness. The signs and symptoms of concussion include any of the following:

<i>Loss of consciousness</i>	<i>Giddiness or unsteadiness</i>
<i>Loss of memory</i>	<i>Vomiting</i>
<i>Confusion and disorientation</i>	<i>Headache</i>
<i>Double or blurred vision</i>	

Being unaware of what happened, even for a few moments at the time of the injury is the most consistent sign that the player is or has been concussed.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

This document must be read in conjunction with the International Rugby Board's Regulation 10 MEDICAL. No local rule, regulation or decision can be introduced to overrule Regulation 10. Concussion occurs when, after a blow to the head, there is brain injury with some immediate disturbances to cerebral function.

What are the objective signs of a concussion?

The signs of concussion include:

- Player appears dazed
- Player has vacant facial expression
- Confusion about assignment
- Athlete forgets plays
- Disorientation to game or score
- Inappropriate emotional reaction
- Player displays clumsiness
- Player is slow to answer questions
- Loss of consciousness
- Any change in typical behavior

What are the subjective symptoms of concussion?

The symptoms of concussion reported by athletes include:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling slowed down
- Feeling "foggy" or "not sharp"
- Change in sleep pattern
- Concentration or memory problems
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Feeling more emotional

What are the causes of a concussion?

A concussion is not necessarily a bruise to the brain caused by hitting a hard surface. In fact, no physical swelling or bleeding is usually seen on radiological scans.

Impact: The concussion occurs from impact when the head accelerates rapidly and then is stopped, or from spinning when the head is spun rapidly and then is stopped. Impact to the brain can occur when the head slams into a hard surface. The skull is stopped by the hard surface but the brain, floating in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), can still move and is shaken.

Spinning: Spinning of the brain can occur when a blow causes the head to snap rapidly. The skull then stops spinning but the brain, floating in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), can still move and is damaged.

Violent trauma: Violent trauma, whether it be from shaking or spinning, causes the brain cells to become depolarized and fire all their neurotransmitters at once in an abrupt cascade, flooding the brain with chemicals -- there is a sudden flood of ions (including sodium, potassium, and calcium) -- and deadening receptors in the brain that are associated with learning and memory.

Management Guidelines

- The most consistent sign that the player is (or has been) concussed is that the player is unaware of what happened.
- A player showing any of these signs or symptoms should be removed from the field and referred for medical attention.
- Prolonged loss of consciousness as a result of a blow to the head may be indicative of a more serious injury, so the player should be immediately referred to a hospital for further attention. With a brief loss of consciousness, the player should be removed from the game for immediate medical assessment.
- Loss of consciousness for a period exceeding 4 or 5 minutes as a result of a blow to the head may be indicative of a more serious injury so the player should be immediately referred to a hospital for further attention.
- All concussion episodes should be reviewed by a medical practitioner.

WARNINGS

1. Potential serious complications may occur in the 24 hours after a seemingly slight head injury. Accordingly, deterioration of consciousness after apparent recovery or the onset of symptoms such as headaches, increasing drowsiness, blurred vision and vomiting, require immediate medical assessment.
2. If the Player is Unconscious it is prudent to err on the side of caution and management of the player should be based upon suspecting an associated spinal fracture.
3. If respiratory arrest occurs, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) should be commenced and an ambulance should be summonsed immediately.
4. Determine the manner in which it happened and determine if there is sensory or power loss. If there is no one experienced in the management of this problem the PLAYER SHOULD NOT BE MOVED but given emotional support while awaiting the ambulance.
5. Ensure the player is kept warm.