April 2011: National Youth Sports Safety Month

Recognizing, Responding and Preventing Concussions in Youth Sports

The Facts:

- A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body.
- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.
- Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death.

Violence and Injury Prevention Program | Ohio Department of Health

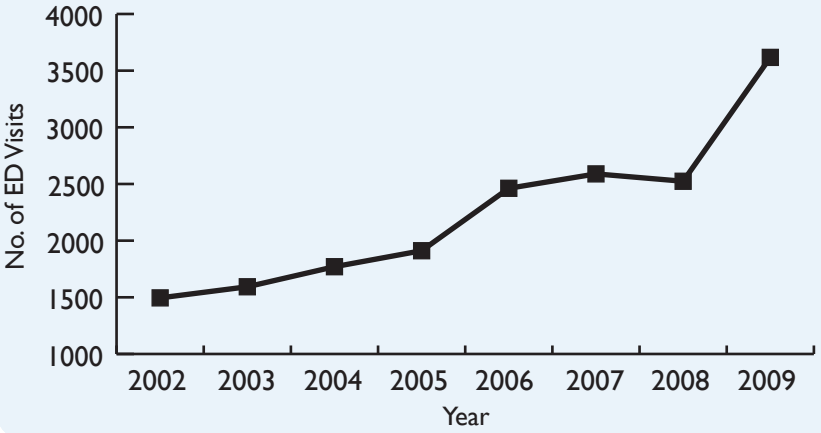
www.healthyohioprogram.org/vipp/injury.aspx

Healthy Ohio
The State of Living Well.

Did You Know?

- Emergency department visits in Ohio for **sports-related TBIs increased by 142 percent** from 2002 to 2009.[i]
- Brain injury is the **leading cause of sports-related death** to children.[ii]
- Each year, U.S. emergency departments treat **an estimated 135,000 sports- and recreation-related TBIs**, including concussions, among children ages 5 to 18.[iii]
- In Ohio, emergency department visits for the 17,961 sports-related TBIs from 2002 to 2009 were associated with more than **$25.8 million in treatment charges**.[iv]
- **Effective response and treatment for TBI sufferers can save money.** Adherence to treatment guidelines for severely injured TBI patients costs about $2,500 per person but will **save over $11,000 in direct medical costs**.[v]

Emergency Department visits for Sports-related TBIs 18 years old and younger, Ohio, 2002-09[vi]



i. Emeregency Department data provided by Ohio Hospital Association and analyzed by the Ohio Department of Health; ii. Sport and Recreation Safety Fact Sheet, Safe Kids, http://www.safekids.org/our-work/research/fact-sheets/sport-and-recreation-safety-fact-sheet.html; iii. MMRW Weekly, Nonfatal Traumatic Brain Injuries from Sports and Recreation Activities, United States, 2001--2005, July 27, 2007 / 56(29);733-737; iv. Emergency Department data provided by Ohio Hospital Association and analyzed by the Ohio Department of Health; v. NCSL Traumatic Brain Injury Legislation, http://www.ncsl.org/?tabid=18687; vi. Emergency Department data provided by Ohio Hospital Association and analyzed by the Ohio Department of Health.

Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after the injury. If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep the athlete out of play and seek medical attention.[vii]

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion

Signs Observed by Parent or Coach

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior/after to hit or fall

Responding to a Suspected Concussion

The National Federation of State High School Associations recommends the following 4-step management plan if an athlete is suspected of having a concussion:

Step 1 - ***No athlete should return to play (RTP)*** or practice on the same day of a concussion.

Step 2 - Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate healthcare professional that day.

Step 3 - Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.

Step 4 - After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.[viii]

Preventing Concussion in Youth Sports

- Make sure athletes ***wear the right protective equipment*** for their activity. Such equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

- Teach athletes ***safe playing techniques*** and encourage them to ***follow the rules of play***.

- Encourage athletes to practice ***good sportsmanship*** at all times.[ix]

For more information on concussion in youth sports please visit:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
www.cdc.gov/concussion

The National Federation of State High School Associations:
www.nfhs.org

The National Federation of State High School Associations Learning Center (featuring a free online training course): **www.nfhslearn.com**

vii. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/recognize.html; viii. National Federation of State High School Associations, Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports, http://www.nfhs.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=3353; ix. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/coaches_Engl.pdf.