



Heavens Eleven Football Club Concussion Policy

The game of soccer, like many other sports, is a contact sport and can, at times, be played in a very physical manner. The inherent risks and dangers of playing soccer include the risk of injury, including concussions, from contact with other players, the ball, field equipment, goal posts, and/or the playing surface. All players and families who participate with HEFC programs need to be aware of these risks and are encouraged to seek information on recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

While HEFC coaches and staff are instructed to use good judgment and common sense in identifying and managing players who may be concussed, players and parents/guardians are hereby notified, and need to understand, that HEFC coaches and staff members are not medical doctors and cannot be expected to provide a medically based diagnosis of a concussion, or any other injury, to players, nor provide treatment advice for any such concussion or injury.

As such, it is imperative that players and parents/guardians educate themselves in the area of concussions and take a personal responsibility for being proactive in managing the health and well-being of their players and themselves. Players who believe they may have a concussion, whether sustained during HEFC activities or not, should communicate their concerns to their coach and should seek appropriate medical attention.

If a player is diagnosed as having a concussion, regardless of its severity, the affected player will not be allowed to participate in training or games until a written letter of release is obtained from a physician.

HEFC and its coaches reserve the right to withhold any player from participating in training or games when either deems there is a reasonable possibility that a player is suffering from a concussion or concussion-like symptoms.

What is a concussion? A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. It results in your brain not working, as it should, it may or may not cause you to black out or pass out. It can happen to you from a fall, a hit to the head, or a hit to the body that causes your head and your brain to move quickly back and forth.

How do I know if I have a concussion? There are many signs and symptoms that you may have following a concussion. A concussion can affect your thinking, the way your body feels, your mood, or your sleep. Here are some things to look for:

Thinking/Remembering	Physical	Emotional/Mood	Sleep
Difficulty thinking clearly	Headache	Irritability – things bother you more easily	Sleeping more than usual
Taking longer to figure things out	Fuzzy or blurry vision	Sadness	Sleeping less than usual
Difficulty concentrating	Feeling sick to your stomach/queasy	Being more moody	Trouble falling asleep
Difficulty remembering new information	Vomiting/Throwing up	Feeling nervous or worried	Feeling tired
	Dizziness	Crying more	
	Balance problems		
	Sensitivity to noise or light		

Table is adapted from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>)

What should I do if I think I have a concussion? If you are having any of the signs or symptoms listed above, you should tell your parents, coach, or other responsible adult so they can get you the help you need. If a parent notices these symptoms, they should inform the coach or executive director.

When should I be particularly concerned? If you have a headache that gets worse over time, you are unable to control your body, you throw up repeatedly or feel more and more sick to your stomach, or your words are coming out funny/slurred, you should let an adult like your parent or coach know right away, so they can get you the help you need before things get any worse.

What are some of the problems that may affect me after a concussion? You may have trouble in some of your classes at school or even with activities at home. If you continue to play or return to play too early with a concussion, you may have long term trouble remembering things or paying attention, headaches may last a long time, or personality changes can occur. Once you have a concussion, you are more likely to have another concussion.

How do I know when it's ok to return to physical activity and my sport after a concussion? After telling your coach, your parents, and any medical personnel around that you think you have a concussion; a doctor trained in helping people with concussions will probably see you. Your coach and parents can help decide who is best to treat you and help to make the decision on when you should return to activity/play or practice. You should not return to play or practice on the same day as your suspected concussion.