



Triathlon Ontario Concussion Policy

PURPOSE

1. Triathlon Ontario is committed to maintaining the health of its athletes and believes that an athlete's health is more important than participating in the sport of triathlon and multisport. Triathlon Ontario recognizes the increased awareness of concussions and their long-term effects and Triathlon Ontario therefore enacts this Policy as a tool to help manage concussed and possibly-concussed athletes and preserve the health of its members.

SCOPE

2. This Policy applies to all Triathlon Ontario athletes, coaches, officials, and members.

PROCEDURE

3. During all triathlon and multisport events, competitions, and practices sanctioned by Triathlon Ontario, participants (which include coaches, athletes, officials, and other members) will use their best efforts to:

a) Be aware of incidents that may cause a concussion, such as:

- Falls
- Accidents
- Collisions
- Head trauma

b) Understand the symptoms that may result from a concussion, such as:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Difficulty concentrating
- Amnesia
- Fatigue or low energy
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Irritability or very emotional (nervous/sad/anxious)
- Poor appetite
- Difficulty remembering/confusion
- Blurred vision
- Balance problems
- Headache or feeling of "pressure in head"
- Loss of consciousness
- Feeling slowed down/feeling of "being in a fog"

c) Identify athletes or other individuals who have been involved in any of the above incidents and/or exhibit any of the above symptoms, additional information:

- Signs/symptoms can appear right after the injury or may appear within hours or days of the injury
- Signs/symptoms may be different for everyone
- An individual may be reluctant to report symptoms because of a fear they will be removed from the activity, or their status on a team or in a race could be jeopardized

- It may be difficult for younger children and those with special needs or where English/French is not their first language to communicate how they are feeling
- Signs/symptoms for younger children may not be as obvious as in older children and adults

d) Memory check: In the event of an athlete sustaining a possible concussion a Triathlon Ontario trained race official can ask the following questions to conduct a basic memory check while awaiting emergency medical personnel:

- Name/Age/Day/Month/Time of day
- How did you get injured?
- What race are we at now?
- How did you get to the race site?
- What is the last thing you remember before the injury? What is the first thing you remembered after the injury?

4. Athletes or other individuals who have been involved in an incident during a race or training that may cause a concussion and who may exhibit symptoms of a concussion shall be identified and removed from the activity. The injured athlete should not be allowed to re-enter the race unless cleared by a medical professional.

5. Following the athlete being removed from the activity, the athlete's coach or other individual in charge of the athlete (if the athlete is a minor) or someone familiar to the athlete should:

- Call an emergency number (if the situation appears serious and there is not an ambulance on site)
- Notify the athlete's parent (if the athlete is a minor) or someone close to the athlete (if the athlete is not a minor)
- Have a ride home for the athlete arranged
- Isolate the athlete into a dark room or area
- Reduce external stimulus (noise, other people, etc)
- Remain with the athlete until he or she can be taken home
- Encourage the consultation of a physician

RETURN TO TRIATHLON/MULTISPORT

Athletes with a suspected concussion should be assessed by a medical professional before returning to any activity. Athletes who are cleared and there is no concussion diagnosis are allowed to return to activities. Athletes who are diagnosed with a concussion should follow the recovery/return to play guidelines set by their doctor and coaches. The Coaching Association of Canada recommends the following return to play steps for an athlete recovering from a concussion:

Step 1: No Activity – Complete Rest Only

- Limit school, work and tasks requiring concentration. Refrain from physical activity until symptoms are gone. Once symptoms are gone, a physician (preferably concussion specialized) should be consulted before beginning a step wise return to play process

Step 2: Light Aerobic Exercise

- Activities such as walking or stationary cycling. The athlete should be supervised by someone who can help monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting. The duration and intensity of the aerobic exercise can be gradually increased over time is no symptoms or signs return during the exercise or post exercise (including next day)

Step 3: Sport Specific Activities

- Activities specific to an athletes sport can begin at this stage. There should be no body contact or jarring motions.

Step 4: Begin Regular Training Drills

Step 5: Return To Field of Play

With all of the steps it should be noted that if at any point concussion symptoms become apparent the athlete should return to until symptoms have resolved or consult their physician if the symptoms persist.

These steps are not set to a specific timeline, the recovery time/return to play with vary for everyone. Returning to normal activities, racing and training, is a process that requires patience, attention, and caution.

An athlete should never return to the field of play if they have any symptoms of a concussion.

These guidelines were developed for athletes over the age of 10, younger athletes may require special guidelines and recovery/return to play should be at the discretion of a medical professional.

MEDICAL CLEARANCE

This Policy requires the athlete to consult with a medical professional throughout this process and Triathlon Ontario will comply with all directions provided by the medical professional which may supersede this Policy.