



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. A hit to your head, neck or body that causes a sudden, rapid movement of your head can cause a concussion.

For example, you can get a concussion if you get hit in the head with a ball or other object, or fall down hard onto the floor.

How you can help prevent a concussion

- Wear your equipment, make sure it is in good condition and fits you properly.
- Play by the rules of your sport. Play safely and fairly so you do not hurt yourself or all others playing.
- Learn about concussions by reading this resource.

How do I know if I have a concussion?

A concussion may cause you to feel differently physically or emotionally. It may affect the way you think or remember things. A concussion may also affect how you sleep.



Some examples of how you may feel if you have a concussion are:



If you have a concussion, other people might notice changes in you or how you are acting. Others might see you:

- Moving slowly to get up after a hit to the head or falling to the ground
- Lying still on the ground
- Confused, or unable to respond well to questions
- Stumbling
- Holding on to your head



What to do if you have a concussion

If you think you might have a concussion, stop the activity you are doing and tell or show an adult how you feel right away (for example, touch your head) so they can help you. You can tell a parent, caregiver, coach, teacher, or other adult you trust. This adult will make sure you get medical attention (go to a doctor) to find out if you have a concussion or not. While you are waiting to go to the doctor, it might help you to be where it is quiet and you can feel calm. Lots of noise and activity can bother you if you have a concussion.

Special Olympics Canada and its chapters has rules in place to keep you safe while you play your sport. If you might have a concussion, you will not be left alone or sent home by yourself until you are seen by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, and your emergency contact will be called.



Signs of an Emergency

If you experience any of the below symptoms after a hit to the head, neck or body, **call 911** or go to the emergency department at your hospital right away.

- Neck pain or tenderness
- Seeing double
- Weakness or tingling in arms or legs
- Severe or increasing headache
- Seizure or convulsion
- Loss of consciousness (knocked out)
- Throwing up more than once
- Increasingly restless, agitated or aggressive
- Getting more and more confused



Returning to sport and programs

After a concussion, you cannot continue to participate in activities where you might get another concussion or activities that make you feel worse. It is important to give yourself time to recover. This might mean that you are not able to play your sport for a few weeks or longer.

You can return to daily activities and your sport slowly and following return-to-activity steps to help. It is important that you do not return to sports or any activity where you can get a concussion again without a doctor (or nurse practitioner) saying that you can (or giving you 'medical clearance'). You, your medical doctor or nurse practitioner, coach, school and family/caregiver will work together to return you to your activities, work, school and sport safely.

Links to resources about concussion

- [Special Olympics Canada](#)
- [Parachute.ca/concussion](https://parachute.ca/concussion)
- [Government of Ontario Rowan's Law Resources](#)