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# My child has a concussion.

## What do I do now?

A concussion is a bruised brain. And just like a bruise on your arm or leg, it usually only needs some time to heal on its own. Unlike a regular bruise there are a few extra precautions to prevent making the injury worse and risking permanent brain damage.

## Aren't concussions something that just happen to football players?

We often think of concussions as something that is more of a sports related injury. In many sports concussions are common. However, it is just as important to be aware that you can get a concussion in several ways and 90% of these do not involve losing consciousness. Any head injury has the potential to be a concussion and all of them need to be watch and treated with equal seriousness. **The follow symptoms should be looked for in the first few hours after a head injury.**

- Have a headache, especially if it progressively gets worse.
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Dizziness or unsteadiness with standing or walking
- Difficulty remembering things that happened before or after the injury.
- Trouble with concentration
- Changes in sleep (sleeping more or less than usual, being extra drowsy during the day)
- Emotional changes (being more irritable than usual, crying for no good reason)
- Doing things more slowly, almost like “being stuck in slow motion.”

It will typically take 1-2 weeks to fully heal from a concussion. Don't worry you don't have to keep them awake; this is an old medical myth. Nonetheless, for the first 10-12 hours you should wake them every couple of hours to ensure they aren't worsening.

## How do you treat a concussion?

Most importantly, you need to rest your brain and your body. No physical exertion. Sleep is also important.

- 1) **Physical rest:** If any symptoms listed above are present, a person diagnosed with a concussion should avoid physical activity. This includes, PE, competitions, physical hobbies like bike riding and climbing. Anything that could cause further damage from a fall or hitting of the head. **OFF LIMITS.**
- 2) **Brain rest:** Limit video games, difficult homework, loud music, watching tv, using smartphones, etc, for the first few days.

## Can my child still go to school?

Most of the time, yes. They should return when they can tolerate 30-45 minutes of mental work. (this includes watching TV or Texting on their phone.)

## When can they play again?

Once they are totally free of symptoms. This means off medications to treat symptoms and be symptom free. They should first return to a full schedule of schoolwork. If this is tolerated, they should return to get a full work up and ensure that exercise will not exert them and re-damage the brain.

## There is a big game, can't they just do this one thing?

**NO!** Re-injury is a much higher probability if the current injury is not yet healed. Second-impact syndrome can leave your child with permanent brain damage. **IT ISNT WORTH THE RISK.**

Visit [www.kansasconcussion.org](http://www.kansasconcussion.org) for more information.

**MEMBERS: As always, your provider is just a phone call or text message away. It's better to be safe than sorry. Reach out if you are worried or if this protocol isn't helping.**