

2025 CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN

To be reviewed by the student and their parent / guardian

“A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells. Medical providers may describe a concussion as a “mild” brain injury because concussions are usually not life-threatening. Even so, the effects of a concussion can be serious” (CDC Feb ‘19).

The goal of the concussion protocol is to ensure that concussed students are identified, treated, and referred appropriately for return-to-learn and return- to-play. When a student sustains impact to or hits their head, a nurse does a concussion assessment, including a neurological check and documentation of self-reported symptoms. In most cases, students do not need to seek a higher level of care. The plan for recovery is student-centered, with accommodations made to address symptoms and optimize recovery. Following a concussion, students are expected to report daily to Health Services to complete a concussion symptom questionnaire that allows for objective assessment of a student’s recovery until symptom-free.

Recognition of Concussion

These signs and symptoms – following a witnessed or suspected blow to the head or body – are indicative of a probable concussion.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can’t recall events prior to or after a hit or fall. • Headache or “pressure” in head. • Appears dazed or stunned. • Fatigue. • Answers questions slowly. • Nausea or vomiting. • Loses consciousness (even briefly). • Exhibits confusion. • Balance problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness. • Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes. • Double or blurry vision. • In sports: Forgets an instruction. Sensitive to or bothered by light/noise. Is confused about an assignment or position. Feels sluggish, groggy, hazy, or foggy. Is unsure of the game, score, or opponent. Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down”.
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Any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion will be removed from competition or practice and will not be allowed to train or compete in a physical activity until they have been examined by and received written permission to participate in physical activities from a health care provider (per Act 68, approved by the VT Legislature in 2013).

The registered nurse on duty and/or the coach/activity leader has been designated to make the initial decision to remove a student from activity when it is suspected the student may have suffered a concussion. A member of the Health Services team will inform parents/guardians that their student/child may have sustained a concussion. Health Services nurses will monitor symptoms daily to decide what modifications of the program and activities are needed, gradually increasing the duration and intensity of activities as tolerated, with the goal of increasing participation without significantly exacerbating symptoms.

Generally, Health Services nurses approve a student’s progress through the steps and accommodations made for returning to full participation with return-to-learn and return-to-play protocols, culminating in unrestricted return to regular activities. Health Services staff reserve the right to defer to the school’s consulting physician or the student’s home physician to make the final determination regarding the student’s return to athletic activity.