**Sporting Association of Adelaide Schools (SAAS)**

**Concussion Guidelines**

**1. BACKGROUND**

This document sets out the guiding principles and provides general advice regarding the

management of concussion in Australia.

These Guidelines have been produced using the Concussion in Sport Australia Position Statement [refer to link (ais.gov.au)](https://www.ais.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/683501/February_2019_-_Concussion_Position_Statement_AC.pdf) developed by; Australian Institute of Sport; Australian Medical Association; Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians and Sports Medicine Australia.

These Guidelines are of a general nature only. Individual treatment will depend on the facts and circumstances specific to each individual case. These Guidelines are not intended as

a standard of care and should not be interpreted as such.

These Guidelines will be reviewed regularly by SAAS and will be modified according to the

development of new knowledge.

It is recommended SAAS Member Schools develop and maintain a Concussion Policy or concussion statement in a broader safety policy considering the SAAS Concussion Guidelines.

**2. WHAT IS CONCUSSION**

Concussion is a traumatic brain injury, induced by biomechanical forces to the head, or anywhere on the body which transmits an impulsive force to the head [[1]](#footnote-1) (McCrory P 2016).

**3. RECOGNISING CONCUSSION**

Recognising concussion can be difficult. The signs and symptoms are variable, non-specific and may be subtle. Concussion should be suspected when an injury results in a knock to the head or body, that transmits a force to the head.

Visual indicators of concussion include:

(a) Loss of consciousness or responsiveness

(b) Lying motionless on the ground/slow to get up

(c) A dazed, blank or vacant expression

(d) Appearing unsteady on feet, balance problems or falling over

(e) Grabbing or clutching of the head

(f) Impact seizure or convulsion.

Concussion can include one or more of the following symptoms:

(a) Symptoms: Headache, dizziness, “don’t feel right”, nausea or vomiting, neck pain, blurred vision.

(b) Behavioural changes: Inappropriate emotions, irritability, feeling nervous or

anxious.

(c) Cognitive impairment: Slowed reaction times, confusion/disorientation- not aware

of location or score, poor attention and concentration, loss of memory for events up

to and/or after the concussion.

The Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool may be used to help identify a suspected concussion (see ‘Resources’ below).

**4. REMOVE FROM PLAY**

Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be immediately removed from play, and

should not be returned to activity until they are assessed by a qualified medical practitioner.

Players with a suspected concussion should not be left alone and should not drive a motor vehicle.

Only qualified medical practitioners should diagnose whether a concussion has occurred,

or provide advice as to whether the player can return to play.

There should be no return to play on the day of a concussive injury.

**5. MEDICIAL ASSESSMENT**

A qualified Medical Practitioner should:

(a) Diagnose whether a concussion has occurred – based on clinical judgement.

(b) Evaluate the injured player for concussion using SCAT 5 (or Child – SCAT 5) or

similar tool (see ‘Resources’ below).

(c) Advise the player as to medical management.

(d) Advise the player as to when it is appropriate to begin a Graduated Return to Play (RTP)

Program (Annexure 1 to these Guidelines).

(e) Clear the player to return to play following the graduated RTP program

**6. RETURN TO PLAY**

Following clearance from a qualified Medical Practitioner for the player to return to play, the

player should progress through a Return to Sport Protocol (see ‘Resources’ below).

In all cases, the Graduated Return to Play Program provides for a minimum of 6 days

before the player can return to contact/collision activities. If the athlete is less than 18 years of age the recommendation no return to contact activities before 14 days from complete resolution of all concussion symptoms.

**7. RESOURCES**

(a) [Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool](http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/47/5/267.full.pdf)

(b) [SCAT 5 – Sport Concussion Assessment Tool – 5th Edition](http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/bjsports/51/11/851.full.pdf)

(c) [Child SCAT 5 - Concussion Assessment Tool (for children aged 5-12 years)](http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/bjsports/early/2017/04/28/bjsports-2017-)

(d) [Return to Sport Protocol for children under 18 years](https://www.concussioninsport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/683649/Return_to_Sport_Protocol_-_children_18_years_of_age_and_under.pdf)

1. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 5th International Conference on

Concussion in Sport held in Berlin, October 2016 (McCrory et al). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)