

**Sport Concussion Policy
Delaware State University
2015-2016**

- 1) All DSU student-athletes must read the NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet and sign the attached *student-athlete statement* annually acknowledging that:
 - a. they have read and understand the *NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet*
 - b. they accept the responsibility for reporting their injuries and illnesses to the institutional medical staff, including signs and symptoms of concussions.

- 2) All DSU coaches (head coaches, assistant coaches, and strength and conditioning coaches) must read and sign the attached *Coaches Concussion Statement* annually acknowledging that they:
 - a. have read and understand the *NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet*
 - b. will encourage their athletes to report any suspected injuries and illnesses to the institutional medical staff, including signs and symptoms of concussions; and that they accept the responsibility for referring any athlete to the medical staff suspected of sustaining a concussion.
 - c. have read and understand the *DSU Concussion Management Protocol*

- 3) All administrators (AD, academic advisors) must read and sign the attached *Administrator Concussion Statement* annually acknowledging that they:
 - a. have read and understand the *NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet*
 - b. will encourage athletes to report and suspected injuries and illnesses to the institutional medical staff, including signs and symptoms of concussions: and that they accept the responsibility for referring any athlete to the medical staff suspected of sustaining a concussion.
 - c. have read and understand the *DSU Concussion Management Protocol*

- 4) All DSU team physicians (primary care), nurses, athletic trainers, graduate assistant athletic trainers, and undergraduate athletic trainers, must read and sign the attached *Medical Provider Concussion Statement* acknowledging that they:
 - a. will provide athletes with the *NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet* and encourage their athletes to report any suspected injuries and illnesses to the institutional medical staff, including signs and symptoms of concussions.
 - b. have read, understand, and will follow the *DSU Concussion Management Protocol*

- 5) The Director of Sports Medicine or his or her designee will coordinate the distribution, educational session, signing, and collection of the necessary documents. The assistant athletic trainer will then provide the signed concussion forms to each team's respective athletic trainer. It is the responsibility of each athletic trainer to file the concussion document in each student-athlete's chart.

- 6) The Director of Sports Medicine and or his or her designee will coordinate an annual meeting with each team – prior to the beginning of the season – to review and update the Concussion Policy with the medical staff. Any changes to the policy will be effective August 1 of that year.

DSU Concussion Management Protocol

Concussions and other brain injuries can be serious and potentially life threatening injuries in sports. Research indicates that these injuries can also have serious consequences later in life if not managed properly. In an effort to prevent short-term and long-term complications of this injury the following concussion management protocol will be used for Delaware State University student-athletes suspected of sustaining a concussion.

A **concussion** is a brain injury, defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain (change in brain function) induced by biomechanical forces (direct or indirect forces to the head). A concussion may be accompanied by loss of consciousness (less than 5% of sport related concussions), and is identified in awake individuals with measures of neurological and cognitive function (ex. memory, vision, balance). Identifying an athlete with a concussion can be difficult; therefore, all suspected head injuries should be taken seriously. Coaches and teammates can be helpful in identifying those who may potentially have a concussion, in those athletes who may be unaware of their condition or may be trying to hide their injury.

- 1) Concussion management begins with ***pre-season baseline testing***. All new student-athletes (first year or transfer) will take the ImPACT and BESS tests.
 - a. The respective team's athletic trainers will be responsible for ensuring that all members have been baseline tested, prior to the first contact practice or contest.

A student-athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion will be evaluated by the team's athletic trainer using the SCAT 3 or a post concussion ImPACT and BESS test. If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion and there is no ATC is present at the time of injury the athlete is to be held from practice or competition until evaluated by an ATC. Should the team physician not be present at the time of injury, the athletic trainer will notify the team physician as soon as possible to develop an evaluation and treatment plan.

Ideally, an assessment of symptoms will be performed at the time of the injury and then serially thereafter (i.e. 2-3 hours post-injury, 24 hours, 48 hours, etc).

- 2) **Any student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall not return** to activity for the remainder of that day and shall remain out of activity until cleared by a team physician. Medical clearance will be determined by the team physician in combination with the athletic trainers.
- 3) In the rare event that an athlete does not have baseline scores, age-matched normative percentile scores will be used for comparison to post-injury scores.

Concussion Assessment:

The following assessment and return to play plan will be used for all concussions:

NO STUDENT-ATHLETE SUSPECTED OF HAVING A CONCUSSION IS PERMITTED TO RETURN TO PLAY THE SAME DAY. ALL ATHLETES MUST BE CLEARED BY THE TEAM PHYSICIAN PRIOR TO RETURN TO PLAY.

- Baseline ImPACT and BESS testing: conducted on each new student-athlete (first-year or transfer) at the beginning of their participation in sport at DSU
- At time of injury: clinical evaluation including symptom assessment, physical and neurological exam, and balance evaluation
- 1-3 hrs post-injury: repeat evaluation; referral to team physician
- When available, ImPACT and BESS testing will be performed within 48 hours of concussion, preferably prior to being seen by the team physician.
- All student-athletes with concussion are to be seen by a team physician as soon as possible.
 - If unable to physically see the team physician, the ATC will discuss with physician.
- Once athlete becomes *asymptomatic*: Determine athlete's status relative to baseline on the following measures.
 - a. Symptom Assessment (Graded Symptom Checklist)
 - b. ImPACT post injury score
 - c. BESS post injury score

The team physician will take into consideration the student-athlete's symptoms, the clinical exam, and performance on all testing to determine when the athletic trainer may be instructed to begin advancing the athlete through the 6-step graduated return to play (RTP) protocol. All athletes must complete the RTP protocol under the guidance of their respective athletic trainer prior to returning to practices/games.

Concussion Education

A concussion is a brain injury that may be caused by a blow to the head or body transmitting force to the head from contact with another player, surface, or equipment. A concussion does not require a loss of consciousness and can cause a wide variety of physical, cognitive, and emotional symptoms. Although many of the signs and symptoms are apparent at the time of the injury, other symptoms may not appear until hours or days later. You may experience one or more of the following signs and/or symptoms:

- **Amnesia**
- **Confusion**
- **Headache**
- **Loss of consciousness**
- **Balance problems or dizziness**
- **Double or fuzzy vision**
- **Sensitivity to light or noise**
- **Nausea**
- **Feeling sluggish, foggy, or groggy**
- **Feeling unusually irritable**
- **Concentration or memory problems**
- **Slowed reaction time**

After sustaining a concussion physical and cognitive rest is needed. It is recommended that you:

- **Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages.**
- **Avoid taking Aspirin, Ibuprofen/Advil, Excedrin, or other anti-inflammatory medications (NSAID's).**
- **Avoid any physical exercise.**
- **Avoid cognitive activities that worsen symptoms (tv, texting, video games, reading).**

****If symptoms become worse, contact 911 or visit your local hospital/ER immediately, and notify your athletic trainer after being seen by the hospital.**