



Student Athlete
Concussion
Diagnosis and
Management
Program
2012-13



CHEROKEE COUNTY SPORTS CONCUSSION PROGRAM

Dear Parent(s):

Cherokee County School District (CCSD) is dedicated to the health and wellness of our student athletes. Over the last several years, a great deal of attention has been directed toward improving the diagnosis and management of concussions.

With the help of Dr. Mark Brown, a board-certified pediatrician and credentialed ImPACT™ Consultant of the Concussion Center North Atlanta, and the financial sponsorship of Northside Hospital-Cherokee, the District is happy to announce the availability of baseline ImPACT™ concussion testing for all high school athletes. This test, used by the majority of NCAA and Professional sports teams, will dramatically help doctors manage concussion cases.

The information in this packet outlines the basics of concussions and of the ImPACT™ test. Additional information can be found at www.impacttest.com.

Included in this Parent Packet are:

- Frequently Asked Questions about Concussions and ImPACT™ Testing
- Instruction Sheet for Parents of Concussed Athletes
- Consent Form for Baseline ImPACT™ Testing

We will begin baseline testing soon, so it is important that we receive your signed Consent Form in a timely fashion.

We look forward to a successful and safe 2012-13 season for our Cherokee County athletes.

Sincerely,

Cherokee County School District
Office of School Operations



Frequently Asked Questions About Concussions

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a change of direction injury. The head either decelerates abruptly (player hits back of head on turf) and/or rotates abruptly (player hit from side and head and face rotate). When the head suddenly changes directions or stops suddenly, the brain continues to go in the original direction and hits against the inside of the skull. This causes the brain cells to stretch, causing injury inside the cells of the brain.

What symptoms will my child have with a concussion?

Only about 3% of young people with a concussion will be “knocked out”! **The most common early symptoms are headache, nausea with one or two episodes of vomiting, balance problems, blank stare and delayed response to questions, repeating questions, and short-term memory loss.**

Until the brain is healed, continuing symptoms of concussion may include:

- Headache/Nausea
- Fatigue/Sleeping too much or having trouble sleeping
- Dizziness/Balance problems
- Malaise/Feeling in a “Fog”/Feeling slow/Trouble concentrating or remembering
- Light or noise sensitivity
- Feeling emotional changes/Irritable/Feeling flat
- Just not themselves

What will happen if my child suffers a head injury at a school athletic event?

Most CCSD high school coaching staff will be trained in the recognition of possible head injuries. If your child suffers a potential concussion event and symptoms are not emergent, you will be contacted to come and pick him/her up. At that time, the athletic trainer or coach may provide a written description of observed symptoms and care precautions. In the most extreme cases, the Coaching staff may contact “911” for emergency transport. In less extreme cases, the parent may arrange for emergency transport to an emergency medical facility. In all cases, each parent is encouraged to seek immediate medical attention.



When can my child return to play?

Return-to-Play Criteria:

1. **No return to play on the day of injury.**
2. **Georgia High School Association recommends the athlete be screened by their physician on the day of injury. The athlete will be guided to see his/her physician or a physician such as Cherokee County School District's Concussion Consultant Dr. Mark Brown of the Concussion Center North Atlanta, with expertise in the care of concussions, with 48-72 hours of injury. A list of other Atlanta-area concussion physicians can be found at www.impacttest.com.**
3. **The athlete must be cleared by a physician, preferably an expert in concussion management before the athlete is allowed to participate in the activity or practice. If the athlete tolerates full contact practice with no symptoms, then he/she will be allowed to return to game play.**

Do I have to take my child to see a physician?

Yes. Once the symptoms of possible head injury have been identified, a medical doctor must clear the student athlete for return to play. Dr. Mark Brown is one of the five doctors in the Atlanta area who is a credentialed ImPACT™ consultant. This means that Dr. Brown has significant specialized training in the diagnosis and management of common and complex concussions, along with expertise in interpretation of the ImPACT™ test. He is a board-certified pediatrician, with more than 16 years' experience in sports medicine. However, you may choose to visit your personal family doctor or any of the other concussion experts in the Atlanta area. Contact information for other ImPACT™ certified physicians is available at www.impacttest.com. With your permission, ImPACT™ test results can be provided to any physician you choose.

What danger is there if my child returns to play before completely healed?

If an athlete returns to play before a concussion is completely healed, evidence shows increased risk of catastrophic Second Impact Syndrome, which can cause fatal damage to the brain and increased risk of Post Concussive Syndrome, a condition that can cause long-term concussion symptoms.

What is the ImPACT™ Test?

ImPACT™ stands for Immediate Post-concussive Assessment and Cognitive Testing. It is a 20-minute, "video-game-type" computer test, which measures an athlete's reaction time, processing speed, short-term memory, concentration and other brain functions that are affected by concussions. It can be given at school in the computer lab or easily be given at home.

The baseline test is typically given before the season starts. Since each athlete is unique, if an athlete suffers a concussion, medical personnel will have the baseline test of that athlete to compare with post-injury ImPACT™ test(s). In combination with a normal complete neurologi-

cal examination, this comparison will help doctors know when the athlete's brain is again functioning normally.

Why is ImPACT™ important for high-school athletes?

In uncomplicated concussions, standard imaging such as CT and MRI scans will be negative. In fact, research has shown that a complete and thorough evaluation by a physician will still miss trouble in 20-25 percent of cases involving athletes. A complete and thorough evaluation by a physician is important in uncovering other neurological, muscular, or skeletal injuries, but the ImPACT™ test picks up subtle abnormalities that even a doctor may not observe.

Is there any danger to taking the ImPACT™ Test?

No, ImPACT™ is a non-invasive, computer-based test and does not involve any danger to the athlete.

Why give everyone a baseline test?

Just as we all have different finger prints, we all will have different baseline results on the ImPACT™ test. Having an athlete's baseline will help medical professionals more accurately interpret post-injury tests.

How much does this cost?

The cost for the initial baseline testing is about \$2. Baseline testing is done every other year for student-athletes. Northside Hospital-Cherokee is sponsoring the costs associated with initial baseline testing – for athletes that participate in CCSD approved high school sports programs. Post-injury testing and treatment will be billed to the athlete's insurance provider, just as any doctor's visit would be billed.

What if I refuse to give permission for the baseline ImPACT™ Test?

The Georgia High School Association (GHSA) requires all schools to have a concussion management program. Cherokee County School District has included ImPACT™ testing as an important part of the CCSD program. Baseline testing is optional. If you do not permit baseline testing, it will have no effect on your child's participation in sports. However, if your child suffers a concussion causing injury, your child must be medically cleared by a Medical Doctor. An ImPACT™ baseline test will assist in the diagnosis and subsequent treatment of a concussion.



FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS OF CONCUSSED STUDENT/ATHLETE

THE FOLLOWING CARE PROCEDURES ARE SUGGESTED WHEN A STUDENT ATHLETE IS SUSPECTED TO HAVE INCURRED A HEAD INJURY OR CONCUSSION:

- **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CHILD ALONE OVER THE NEXT 12 HOURS.**
 - **AWAKEN YOUR CHILD ONCE DURING THE NIGHT TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE EASILY AROUSABLE.**
 - **DO NOT ALLOW THEM TO DRIVE.**
1. **IF YOUR CHILD DEVELOPS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS, DO NOT MOVE YOUR CHILD AND CALL 911 FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSPORT TO AN EMERGENCY ROOM:**
 - a. SEVERE NECK PAIN
 - b. BLOOD FROM EITHER EAR
 - c. WEAKNESS OR NUMBNESS OR INABILITY TO MOVE ARMS AND OR LEGS.
 - d. UNBEARABLE HEADACHE
 - e. BECOMES CONFUSED, DISORIENTED, OR COMBATIVE
 - f. BECOMES UNCONSCIOUS/ UNEQUAL OR UNREACTIVE PUPILS
 2. **IF YOUR CHILD DEVELOPES ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS, TRANSPORT THEM YOURSELF TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM(OR YOU MAY CALL 911):**
 - a. INCREASINGLY WORSE HEADACHE
 - b. RECURRENT FORCEFUL VOMITING(3 OR MORE EPISODES)
 - c. SLURRED SPEECH
 - d. WORSENING BALANCE PROBLEMS
 - e. VISION LOSS OR DRAMATICALLY WORSE VISION
 - f. BECOMING PROGRESSIVELY LESS AROUSABLE AND DIFFICULT TO AWAKEN
 - g. ANY CONCERN YOU HAVE CHILD IS GETTING WORSE
 3. **COMMON SYMPTOMS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ROOM CARE:**
 - a. NAUSEA WITH 1 OR AT MOST 2 EPISODES OF VOMITING
 - b. DIFFUSE OR PRESSURE TYPE MODERATE HEADACHE THAT IS STABLE
 - c. AMNESIA FOR EVENTS JUST BEFORE AND JUST AFTER INJURY
 - d. LIGHT AND NOISE SENSITIVITY/MILD DIZZINESS/MILD BALANCE PROBLEMS
 - e. MILDLY BLURRED VISION BUT ABLE TO SEE OUT OF BOTH EYES
 - f. FORGETFUL AND REPEATS QUESTIONS/FEELS GROGGY/"SPACEY"/TIRED/SLOW

FOR INJURIES WHICH DO NOT REQUIRE AN EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT , WE RECOMMEND YOU CONTACT YOUR PRIMARY CARE DOCTOR OR E-MAIL MARK BROWN, MD, FAAP OF CONCUSSION CENTER NORTH ATLANTA, ON THE DAY OF INJURY. DR. BROWN CAN BE REACHED AT brownosu77@aol.com.

OTHER DOCTORS, EXPERTS IN THE FIELD OF CONCUSSION CARE, CAN BE FOUND AT www.impacttest.com. UNTIL YOUR CHILD IS SEEN BY A DOCTOR, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOUR CHILD BE RESTRICTED FROM ACTIVITIES WHICH COULD RESULT IN YOUR CHILD HITTING HIS/HER HEAD. YOUR CHILD SHOULD REST AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

CHEROKEE SCHOOLS
PARENTAL CONSENT FORM FOR BASELINE ImPACT™ TESTING

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Cherokee County Board of Education/Cherokee County School District is currently implementing an innovative program for our student-athletes. This program will assist our parents and team physicians/athletic trainers in evaluating and treating head injuries (e.g., concussion). In order to better manage concussions sustained by our student-athletes, we have contracted with ImPACT™ (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). ImPACT™ is a computerized exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to diagnose and manage concussions. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during practice or competition, ImPACT™ may be used to help determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed.

Ideally the computerized exam is given to athletes before beginning contact sport practice or competition. This non-invasive test is set up in “video-game” type format and takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. It is simple, and many athletes enjoy the challenge of taking the test. Essentially, the ImPACT™ test is a preseason physical of the brain. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, speed, and concentration. The test is not an IQ test. This data will be saved in a secure database maintained by ImPACT™ which may be accessed by you or your Doctor in the event your child receives a head injury. Test results will not become a part of your child’s academic/school records.

If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will have the availability to re-take the test to help evaluate the injury. Both the baseline and post-injury test data is stored in the ImPACT™ database. The information gathered can be shared with your family doctor. The test data will enable your doctor to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe for the injured athlete. If an injury of this nature occurs to your child, you will be reminded on how to obtain the ImPACT™ data. At the time of the initial testing, your child will be prompted to establish an individual confidential logon and password. It is important that the logon and password be remembered by you and your child. The School District WILL NOT have access to your child’s data or logon and password.

Baseline testing for Cherokee County athletes is optional and will not in any way affect team selection or your child’s participation. For post-injury testing, your child will need to follow up with a doctor and these services will be billed as any regular doctor visit is billed.

If you agree to participate in baseline testing, you will be provided additional information about the schedule for testing. In most cases, testing will be completed at home via the internet. Dates and times will be available for testing at the school for those students without internet access at home.

I wish to stress that the ImPACT™ testing procedures are non-invasive, and they pose no risks to your student-athlete. We are excited to implement this program given that it provides us the best available information for managing concussions and preventing potential brain damage that can occur with multiple concussions. The Cherokee County schools administration, coaching, and athletic training staffs are striving to keep your child’s health and safety at the forefront of the student athletic experience.

Please return the attached page with the appropriate signatures. If you have any further questions regarding this program, please feel free to contact your school’s Athletics Director.

CONSENT FORM

For use of the Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing (ImPACT™)

I have read the attached information. I understand its contents. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and all questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that participation in the ImPACT™ concussion baseline testing is highly recommended but not required for athletes in Cherokee County schools.

I also understand that the ImPACT™ testing is merely a tool to assist Medical Professionals in the diagnosis and subsequent treatment of potentially serious injuries, the ImPACT™ testing IS NOT a substitute for treatment by a medical professional. I **acknowledge that if my child is suspected of receiving a concussion causing injury, my child WILL NOT be allowed to participate in athletics until cleared by a medical doctor.**

ATHLETE'S NAME: _____

SCHOOL: _____ GRADE: _____

Address: _____

Sport(s) _____

Please INITIAL one of the boxes below, sign, date and return to the coach or athletic trainer for your child's team.

YES, I give permission for my child, named above, to participate in baseline testing with the ImPACT program.

NO, I do not give permission for my child to participate in baseline testing.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME _____
(Please print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____