



University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Athletic Training Department

Concussion Policy

Management of concussion in sport can be challenging as there are no universal standards on concussion care and return to play guidelines. The following document is a concussion policy and management plan that specifically outlines the role of the University of Louisiana-Lafayette Athletic Training and Sports Medicine health care providers. The goal for developing this protocol is that athletic trainers and physicians dealing with concussions adopt a common management program to allow for the diagnosis, treatment and return to play guidelines of concussed athletes.

Education

UL will present all student-athletes with the NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet for Student Athletes. Student-Athletes will be required to sign a *Student-Athlete Concussion Acknowledge Statement* annually stating they receive, have read and understand the NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet. This document on concussions includes the definition of concussion, how to prevent concussion, symptoms of concussion, and how to report any concerns for themselves, or a teammate regarding a concussion.

UL will present the Director of Athletics, all coaches and athletic staff with the NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet for athletic staff. The director of athletics, coaches and athletics staff will be required to sign a *Athletics Staff Concussion Acknowledge Statement* annually stating they receive, have read and understand the NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet. This document on concussions includes the definition of concussion, how to prevent concussion, symptoms of concussion, and how to report any concerns for student-athletes regarding a concussion. This will be a requirement prior to the start of each sports first official practice.

Baseline Assessment

Upon enrollment at UL and before the first day of practice, every student-athlete will undergo baseline testing. As recommended by the NCAA, the baseline assessments for UL student athletes will consist of the following areas:

- Graded Symptom Checklist
- The ImPACT Neuropsychological Test
- Balance Error Scoring System (BESS) Test

Concussion

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Athletic Training staff will determine whether or not a concussion has occurred, realizing that each concussion and each student-athlete is different, and individual treatment plans are necessary. A concussion is a brain injury that may be caused by a blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body from an impulsive force transmitted to the head. Concussions can also result from contact with another player, hitting a hard surface such as the ground, or being hit by a piece of equipment such as a bat, basketball or softball. A concussion may present itself differently from one athlete to another.

A concussion can happen even if the athlete DOES NOT lose consciousness

Physical Symptoms	Cognitive Symptoms	Emotional Symptoms
<i>Headache</i> <i>Vision Difficulty</i> <i>Nausea</i> <i>Dizziness</i> <i>Balance Difficulties</i> <i>Light Sensitivity</i> <i>Noise Sensitivity</i> <i>Fatigue</i>	<i>Memory Loss</i> <i>Attention Disorders</i> <i>Concentration Problems</i>	<i>Irritability</i> <i>Sadness</i> <i>Nervousness</i> <i>Sleep Disturbances</i>

When a student-athlete exhibits signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a possible concussion, he/she shall be removed from practice or competition, and be evaluated by the Certified Athletic Trainer and/or Team Physician. The student-athlete will be evaluated and monitored to determine his/her status as it relates to being concussed. Once a student-athlete has been diagnosed with having a concussion, he/she shall be removed from physical activity for the remainder of that day, and not allowed to participate in academic activities. The student-athlete, or their parent, guardian, or roommate, will be provided with instructions on further care and the *Home Concussion Information Sheet* upon discharge.

The student-athlete will be monitored multiple times daily for progression of symptoms from rest, physical exertion, and mental exertion by the Athletic Training Staff. The student-athlete will be evaluated each morning to determine his/her academic participation status. The Athletic Training Staff will use a *Graded Symptom Checklist* and a Balance Error Scoring System (BESS) daily, along with other examinations deemed necessary during the evaluation of the concussed student-athlete until the symptoms have subsided and/or have been resolved. The ImPACT computerized neuropsychological test will also be performed, however, ImPACT tests should not be used as a standalone measure to diagnose the presence or absence of a concussion. All of these evaluations will be compared to the baseline scores of the student-athlete and will aid in the Return to Play and Return to Learn progression.

Student-Athlete Academic Center Advisors will be notified and updated on the condition of the student-athlete after they suffer a concussion. The Academic Center will then inform all of the student-athlete's professors of the condition and progress as updated by team physicians and athletic training staff.

Return to Play

The graduated exertional return to play process is designed to allow a gradual increase in exercise volume and intensity during the return to play process.

Rules for Progression

- Athlete proceeds to the next level only if asymptomatic at the current level.
- If symptoms occur during activity, stop activity, rest for 24 hours and begin at the previous level that did not produce symptoms.
 1. Light Aerobic Exercise
 - a. 20 minutes stationary bike at 70% maximum heart rate
 2. Moderate Aerobic Exercise
 - a. Interval Bike Ride: 10 sets of 30s sprints/30s recovery
 - b. Bodyweight Circuit: Squats/Push-ups/Sit-ups, 3 sets of 20 each
 3. Sport Specific Exercises
 - a. 60 yard shuttle run
 - b. Plyometrics Circuit (examples): 10 yd bounding/10 medicine ball throws/10 vertical jumps; 3x's each
 - c. 15 minutes of sports-specific non-contact drills
 4. Full Contact Practice
 - a. Limited participation in full contact practice and monitoring of symptoms
 5. Full Participation in Practice

No athlete will be allowed to return to full activity of competition until he/she are asymptomatic in limited, controlled, and full-contact activities. ***Any student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion must be medically cleared by a team physician before returning to competition.***

Return to Learn

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Team Physicians, Athletic Training Staff Athletic Trainers, and the Student-Athlete Academic Center Staff will work together to determine Return to Learn status of a post-concussed student-athlete. The Student-Athlete Academic Center staff will inform the student-athlete's professors and any accommodations that may be necessary in his/her return to the classroom and activities that are associated with his/her full academic return.

Once a student-athlete has been diagnosed with having a concussion, he/she shall be removed from physical activity for the remainder of that day, and not allowed to participate in academic activities. The Student-Athlete Academic Center will be notified of the status of the student-athlete.

Following a concussion, the student-athlete will be seen each morning by a Athletic Training Staff member. At that time, the decision will be made if the student-athlete's symptoms have progressed to allow him/her to attempt to attend class, study hall, and tutoring sessions that day. The Student-Athlete Academic Center Staff will be informed of the student-athletes' progression for the day. The Student-Athlete Academic Center Staff will then convey the status of the student-athletes to their professors. If the student-athlete is allowed to return to class, he/she will be evaluated that afternoon in order to complete an updated symptom checklist, to aid in determining how the day of learning progressed.

In any concussion case when a student-athlete needs counseling, the Athletic Training staff will assist in referring him/her to a Counselor, located at Counseling and Testing on campus.

Athletes with Multiple Concussions

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette athletic trainers and team physicians have the right to review all student-athletes' medical history, both previous and current, and reserve the right to withhold from participation in University sponsored athletic events (i.e., practices, games, weight-lifting, conditioning, etc).