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CONCUSSION POLICY

The Ontario 5 Pin Bowlers' Association (O5PBA) encourages safe play at all times. However, unforeseen incidents can occur, resulting in injury. These incidents could involve a bowler, coach, tournament director, judge of play, executive, board member, volunteer, or any other individual assisting with O5PBA events.

A concussion can occur from a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly back and forth within the skull. It is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that may include:

- headaches
- dizziness
- difficulty concentrating or remembering
- depression or irritability
- drowsiness or difficulty falling asleep

Though concussions are common sport injuries, their sometimes-subtle symptoms may go unnoticed. Without identification and proper management, a concussion can result in permanent or severe brain damage.

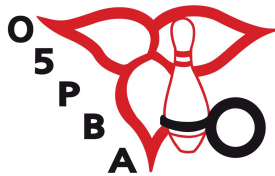
Awareness of the signs and symptoms of concussion and knowledge of how to properly manage a concussion is critical to recovery and helping to ensure the individual is not returning to physical activities too soon, risking further complications.

A concussion is a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor. It is critical that someone with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Definition

A concussion:

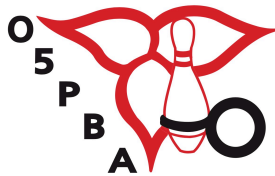
- Is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (i.e., headache, dizziness), cognitive (i.e., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (i.e., depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (i.e., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep).
- May be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull.
- Can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness).
- Cannot normally be seen on x-rays, standard CT scans, or MRIs.



Common Signs and Symptoms of Concussion

Following a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head, a concussion should be suspected in the presence of any one or more of the following signs or symptoms:

Possible Signs Observed A sign is something that will be observed by another person (i.e. parent, coach, spouse, peer).	Possible Symptoms Reported A symptom is something the injured person will feel/report
<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vomiting - slurred speech - slowed reaction time - poor co-ordination or balance - blank stare/glassy-eyed/dazed or vacant look - decreased playing ability - loss of consciousness or lack of responsiveness - lying motionless on the ground or slow to get up - amnesia - seizure or convulsion - grabbing or clutching the head <p>Cognitive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty concentrating - easily distracted - general confusion - cannot remember things that happened before and after the injury - does not know time, date, place, type of activity in which he/she is participating - slowed reaction time (i.e. answering questions or following instructions) <p>Emotional/Behavioural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e. laughing, crying, getting angry easily) <p>Sleep Disturbance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drowsiness - insomnia 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - headache - pressure in head - neck pain - feeling off/not right - ringing in ears - seeing double or blurry/loss of vision - seeing stars, flashing lights - pain at physical site of injury - nausea/stomach ache/pain - balance problems or dizziness - fatigue or feeling tired - sensitivity to light or noise <p>Cognitive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty concentrating or remembering - slowed down, fatigue or low energy - dazed or in a fog <p>Emotional/Behavioural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - irritable, sad, more emotional than usual - nervous, anxious, depressed <p>Sleep Disturbance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drowsy - sleeping more/less than usual - difficulty falling asleep



Additional Information

- Signs/symptoms can appear right after the injury, or may appear within hours or days of the injury.
- The signs/symptoms may be different for everyone.
- An individual may be reluctant to report symptoms because of a fear that they will be removed from the activity, or their status on the team or in a game could be jeopardized.
- It may be difficult for young children, people with special needs, or where English/French is not their first language to communicate how they are feeling.
- Signs for younger children (under the age of 10) may not be as obvious as in older children/adults.

Initial Response – Removal from Physical Activity

An individual responsible for those who are participating in a 5 pin bowling activity who believes that, following a blow to the head, neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head, a participant may have suffered a concussion needs to take immediate action.

For a participant who is:

Unconscious

- Initiate emergency action plan and call 911.
- If applicable, contact the child/youth's parent/guardian to inform them of the injury and that their child is being transported to the hospital.
- Stay with the individual until Emergency Medical Services arrives.
- Monitor and document any physical, emotional, and/or cognitive changes.

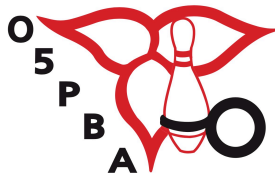
For someone who is unconscious assume there is a possible head and/or neck injury and, only if trained, immobilize the individual before ambulance transportation to hospital. Do not remove any athletic equipment (i.e., helmet) unless there is difficulty breathing.

If applicable, ensure the child/youth's parent/guardian is aware that he/she must inform the coach, administrator and/or supervisor of the child/youth's condition (i.e., concussed or not concussed) prior to the child/youth returning to physical activity.

Even if consciousness is regained, he/she needs to be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Conscious

- Remove the participant from the activity immediately.
- If signs are observed or symptoms are reported, a concussion should be suspected. If a concussion is not suspected (i.e., signs are not observed and symptoms are not reported), the participant may resume physical activity;



however, if applicable, a parent/guardian should be contacted and informed of the incident. Remember – signs and symptoms of concussion may appear within hours or days of the injury.

- If applicable, contact the parent/guardian and inform them of the injury and the need to be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.
- Stay with the injured participant until a parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives.
- Monitor and document any physical, emotional and/or cognitive changes.

For a participant who is conscious, if in doubt sit them out.

Do not administer medication (unless conditions require it – i.e., insulin for diabetics).

If applicable, ensure a parent/guardian is aware that he/she must inform the coach, administrator and/or supervisor of the participant's condition (i.e., concussed or not concussed) prior to their return to physical activity.

Responsibility of Coach, Administrator and/or Supervisor

If a participant has been identified as having a suspected concussion, it is the responsibility of the coach, administrator and/or supervisor of that activity to notify all affected parties including the participant, a parent/guardian (when appropriate) as well as other coaches, administrators and/or supervisors of the suspected concussion. At this point the individual should not participate in any physical activity until he/she has visited a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Medical Examination

Following examination by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner and prior to the individual returning to physical activity, the coach, administrator and/or supervisor must be informed of the results.

- If no concussion is diagnosed the participant may return to physical activities.
- If a concussion is diagnosed return to play must be approved by a medical physician. He/she must provide written documentation from a medical doctor or nurse to his/her coach, administrator and/or supervisor. The documentation must indicate that the individual is symptom-free and able to return to full participation in physical activity before he/she can participate in bowling.

Note – Physical activities can cause concussion symptoms to reappear.

If signs or symptoms return, consult with a medical doctor and/or nurse practitioner.

The O5PBA requires that any return to an activity after suffering from a concussion will only be allowed with a note from a treating medical doctor and/or nurse practitioner, specifying ability to return and any restrictions.