

ImPACT FAQ for Parents/Students

What is a Concussion Management Program?

While sports are a great way for teens to stay healthy, we recognize that there are risks to pushing the limits of speed, strength and endurance. A concussion management program aims to improve detection, management, and outcome of sports-related concussions in middle and high school athletes. Our goals are to raise awareness of the potential dangers of untreated and inadequately managed concussions, improve identification of concussions, decrease negative concussion-related outcomes, and empower athletes and families to participate in the management of concussions.

What is baseline testing and why do I need it?

If you play high risk sports you are at increased risk of incurring a sports-related concussion. By using the computerized ImPACT Test we are able to establish a pre-season baseline of cognitive abilities. This 20-30 minute test tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration. It is simple and set up like a video game.

If I have a concussion how is the ImPACT test used to treat it?

Athletes take the test prior to the season and if the athlete is believed to have suffered a concussion they re-take the exam to help determine the extent of the injury and if the injury has healed. This information is shared with treating physician(s) so that a sound decision can be made as to when return-to-play is appropriate and safe. Testing can be completed as early as 24-hours post-injury or when the athlete appears to be symptom-free.

“I feel fine. I don’t need to take that test.”

Even if you feel “normal”, you may still have symptoms that can be detected by the ImPACT test. Returning to play, or even some normal daily activities, before your brain has healed is dangerous. You put yourself at risk for longer recovery, permanent brain damage, and in rare cases death. Missing one or two games is hard, we know, but one game is not worth missing the whole season or ending your athletic career.

What should I do if I have a concussion?

Once your doctor has examined you and feels that you no longer have symptoms, and you feel as though you are back to normal, you can schedule your follow-up ImPACT test.

How can I get the results from my school?

If you would like to get your data from the school, you can request it at any time—just contact the School Nurse or Athletic Director. The school can provide a printout or PDF.

What if I’ve already taken a baseline test with my primary doctor?

If you have taken a baseline ImPACT test within the past year and have NOT received a concussion since, you may bring in paperwork from your doctor to verify.