

PORTSMOUTH SOCCER CLUB

Concussion Policy, adopted March 17, 2016



This policy, adopted by the Board of Directors of the Portsmouth Soccer Club sets forth the requirements of the club's concussion management program.

Overview

As an organization, Portsmouth Soccer Club's concussion policy is "when in doubt, sit it out." It is simply not worth the risk of potential damage the brain to resume athletic activity when a concussion or suspected concussion has occurred.

Education

- A. On an annual basis, Portsmouth Soccer Club shall provide every coach/assistant coach information on the nature and risk of concussion, criteria for removal and return to play, and risks of not reporting the injury and continuing to play. At a minimum, this shall include providing all coaches/assistant coaches with a copy of the US Youth Soccer Concussion Procedure and Protocol for US Youth Soccer Events and a copy of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) concussion fact sheet found at the CDC "HEADS UP To Youth Sports" website: <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/coach.html>. The club shall require each coach to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information and agreement to follow the policy. Portsmouth Soccer Club will maintain such record for no less than seven years.
- B. Portsmouth Soccer Club shall require each coach/assistant coach to annually take the CDC online training course and follow-up quiz at <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/coach.html>.
- C. Portsmouth Soccer Club shall provide the parents or guardians of every participant, on an annual basis, information on the nature and risk of concussions, criteria for removal and return to play, and risks of not reporting the injury and continuing to play. At a minimum, this shall include providing a copy of the US Youth Soccer Concussion Procedure and Protocol for US Youth Soccer Events and a copy of the CDC concussion fact sheet for parents/guardians found at the CDC "HEADS UP To Youth Sports" website: <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/parents.html>. The club shall require every parent or guardian to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information and agreement to follow. Portsmouth Soccer Club will maintain such record for no less than seven years.
- D. Portsmouth Soccer Club shall review this policy at the Parent's Meeting each season to include local resources available for management and treatment. Portsmouth Soccer Club shall also review the policy at any Coach's Meeting at least annually.
- E. Per current US Soccer guidelines, heading the ball will not be practiced or encouraged in any player age 10 or younger. Players age 11 to 13 will be allowed to head the ball but practice of heading will be on a limited basis.
- F. Portsmouth Soccer Club encourages, but does not require, its coaches, assistant coaches and parents to seek out other means or sources of information regarding concussion diagnosis and management.



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Head Impact Protocol

A. All coaches/assistant coaches are required to immediately remove any player from a game, practice, skill session, or other athletic activity if a player sustains a blow to the head, neck, jarring collision or impact that results in a possible head injury. The player will be evaluated for any signs and symptoms of a concussion. Coaches/Assistant coaches will follow the US Youth Soccer Concussion Procedure and Protocol of US Youth Soccer Events.

1. If a player shows any signs or symptoms of concussion, he or she shall be removed from play and will have to follow the return to play protocol.

2. If a player has no signs or symptoms of concussion, he may be returned to play at the discretion of the coach/assistant coach. If there is more than one coach participating in the session or the game, all coaches must agree that the player may return to play.

B. The coach/assistant coach are required to notify the parents/legal guardians and the Portsmouth Soccer Club Director responsible for your particular division of any player who they suspect of having a concussion. The date/time and description of the incident shall be provided to the parents/guardians and the Portsmouth Soccer Club Director responsible for your particular division.

C. If during the course of a game on Portsmouth Soccer Club fields, a player on either team sustains a suspected head injury, the Portsmouth Soccer Club coach/assistant coach shall notify the on field PSC Board of Director representative of the incident.

D. Any player removed from play (practice, skill session, or game) as a result of head injury or symptoms similar to those of a concussion shall not be allowed to return to any level of practice, skill session or game until they have provided the club with written medical clearance from a licensed medical provider.

E. Parents and/or players are required to report any incident of a concussion or suspected concussion to the coach/assistant coach or club administrator from any activity outside of the Portsmouth Soccer Club. These incidents will be managed in the same manner as if the incident occurred while playing with the club including written authorization of return to play by a medical provider.

Return to Play

A. If a player within Portsmouth Soccer Club is removed from play due to exhibiting symptoms of a concussion, he or she may not return to any athletic activity within or associated with Portsmouth Soccer Club until a licensed healthcare provider has provided the club with written clearance for the player to resume such activities. The player may attend games, practice or other activities without participating athletically in these activities.

B. For the purposes of this provision, a "licensed healthcare provider" means a physician, physician assistant, or athletic trainer licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine; a neuropsychologist licensed by the Virginia Board of Psychology; or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia Board of Nursing. Portsmouth Soccer Club recommends that players with suspected concussions see a licensed healthcare professional with significant experience in treating concussions and will provide recommended providers in the local area for its parents and players.



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C. Once written clearance is obtained by the coach/assistant coach and appropriate Portsmouth Soccer Club Director, the player may return to play. All medical clearances shall be maintained by Portsmouth Soccer Club for a minimum of seven years.

D. When a player does return to play, coaches and parents shall monitor the player for any signs of concussion symptoms. These symptoms could include but are not limited to headaches, nausea, balance problems, "not feeling right", "not feeling well", or difficulty concentrating. If there is a return of symptoms, the coach shall remove the player from athletic activity, notify the parents, and require a new medical clearance prior to returning to play.

E. Portsmouth Soccer Club recommends that all coaches/assistant coaches follow the 5 step return to play as outlined in the Coaches Concussion Fact Sheet from the CDC. Each step will take at least one day to complete. If return of symptoms occurs, the player will need new medical clearance and will have to restart the 5 steps.

Baseline Testing

A. Baseline testing is an exam conducted by trained professionals to help assess a person's brain functioning (including learning and memory skills, ability to pay attention or concentrate, and how quickly a person thinks and solves problems) at a given point in time. The results of such a test can be compared to a repeat exam if a concussion has occurred, to help evaluate whether the injured player is ready to return to play.

B. Baseline testing is not required but is an option for players as early as age 10 with periodic testing as a player grows older. Baseline testing can be obtained through multiple sources including CHKD Sports Medicine among other places.

Requirement for Policy Review

As this is a high visibility topic and also one that is evolving quickly and continually, this policy shall be reviewed by the Board of Directors of Portsmouth Soccer Club annually.

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by PSC Board of Directors, 3.17.2016

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