



MID-PACIFIC INSTITUTE

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Dear Parents:

Concussion awareness has been a hot topic the last two years and rightly so. The potential for serious long-term damage to the brain has far reaching impact. There have been many new awareness and prevention programs implemented recently in schools throughout the country. At MPI, we have been at the front of this wave of change regarding education and treatment of our student athletes as well as the rest of our student body and school faculty and staff. We have a three prong approach: education, prevention and management.

Parents of student athletes are educated annually about concussion in mandatory meetings in order to participate in school athletics. The MPI web site has a concussion page on both the Athletic and Health Room pages which has a wealth of valuable information and resources. Last year, the entire student body was presented with a concussion information program during several school assemblies.

The Athletic Department has been evaluating high-risk athletes using the Bess and Impact baseline assessments. This year they were able to increase the number of those eligible for the screening and have adopted some equipment safety measures aimed to decrease the possibility of concussion in sports such as soccer.

On an individual basis, when we are informed of a child with concussion, we implement a team approach to managing the child's recovery. The faculty and support staff (dean, nurse and school counselor) are made aware of the child's situation, and we develop a plan based on the child's individual needs. This plan is shared with family so input from the home and their MD can be incorporated. The ultimate goal is to allow the child the time for the brain to heal. This may require a slow integration back to full time school. Once the child is back to full academic activity, readiness for athletics (including dance and PE) can be assessed. There is no way to know how long it may take to recover as each child and injury is different.

So what is your role as a parent? The first and foremost is to be alert to your child's symptoms. If they suffered a hit to the head in practice, game or even at home, be alert to any signs such as:

- headache
- dizziness
- blurred vision
- sensitivity to light and sound
- repeated vomiting
- mood or behavior changes
- moves clumsily
- loss of memory about events before, during and/or after the blow

If these symptoms are reported, please see a doctor immediately. If your child is diagnosed with a concussion, please contact the school to keep us informed. Do not wait to see the trainer before seeking medical help. Keep your child out of school until you start to see symptoms improving. Once they start to show improvement, they will be slowly worked back into their academic program. When the MD clears your child medically, we can start the back-to-play process if appropriate.

We encourage you to visit the MPI Concussion website for more comprehensive information. You may also contact me at 973-5120 or nurse@midpac.edu or your pediatrician for any questions.

Sincerely,

Lory Gaskill, RN
School Nurse