

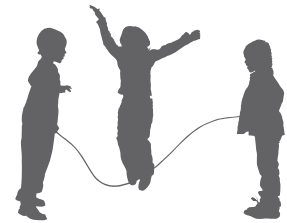
# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

# CONCUSSION

Concussion is a **brain injury** that requires specific treatment for full recovery.

**Young people are most likely to get a concussion.**

**22.2%** of head injury hospitalizations were **children and youth ages 0-19** years and this group takes longer to recover than adults.



- » There is an **increased risk** of concussion if a full recovery from a previous concussion was not completed.
- » Most concussions occur **without loss of consciousness**.



**16,888**

people were treated for concussion in Lower Mainland emergency rooms in 2011

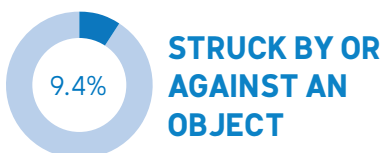
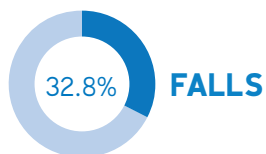


**\$2.4 million**

was spent on *hospitalizations alone\** for concussion treatment in BC in 2010

\*Does not include all other costs such as the services of healthcare professionals, pharmaceuticals or rehabilitation therapy.

The three **leading causes** of concussion in the Lower Mainland are:<sup>†</sup>



<sup>†</sup>2011 data.

## How you can **prevent** concussion:



**Wear protective gear for sports and recreation.** Always use the appropriate protective gear for any sport or recreational activity such as helmets and/or neck protectors. Make sure the equipment fits properly, is well maintained and worn correctly.



**Buckle your seat belt.** A high number of concussions result from automobile collisions – wearing a seat belt may prevent serious injury including an injury to your head during a traffic collision.



**Make your home safe.** Falls around the home are the leading cause of head injury for infants, toddlers and older adults. Keep your home well lit and your floors free of clutter. To reduce the risk of injury to children, use edge and corner guards on furniture, block off stairways and install window guards.



**Wear sensible shoes.** Shoes with good traction can protect you from injury. If you're older, wear shoes that are easy to walk and manoeuvre in.



**Ensure a safe playground.** Choose a well-maintained playground for your child with a ground surface made of shock-absorbing material such as mulch, sand or hardwood.

## Symptoms of concussion may last for days or weeks:



### Physical

- » Headache
- » Blurred vision
- » Unusual eye movements
- » Nausea or vomiting
- » Dizziness & lack of balance
- » Sensitivity to light, noise, smells
- » Fatigue & muscle weakness
- » Seizures



### Emotional

- » Easily irritated
- » Sadness
- » Emotionally imbalanced
- » Nervousness or anxiety
- » Abnormal sleep schedule
- » Difficulty falling asleep



### Cognitive

- » Inability to think clearly
- » Confusion
- » Feeling slowed down
- » Inability to concentrate
- » Inability to retain new information



## FIRST AID

- » **Assess the individual:**  
Concussion should be suspected if one or more visible cues, signs, or symptoms are present such as imbalance or memory loss.
- » **Get medical help:**  
Any head injury or concussion needs to be evaluated by a medical professional immediately in order to eliminate other life-threatening conditions associated with serious concussion.
- » In all cases, follow the basic principles of first aid (danger, response, airway, breathing and circulation).



## RECOVERY

- » Rest is the best way to recover from a concussion – both physical and mental rest.
- » Get plenty of sleep at night and initial daytime rest.
- » Do not return to work, resume daily activities, or “tough it out.”
- » Avoid further contact sports or anything that may cause another concussion until cleared by a medical professional.
- » Limit TV watching, computers and video games.
- » Do not drink alcohol.
- » Stay away from stimulants of all types.
- » Talk to teachers, coaches, employers, friends and family so they can understand.

## Steps for a return to normal activities:

1. **No activity. Mental and physical rest until symptom free.**
2. **Light physical and academic activity under individualized plan. If symptoms return, reduce or stop activities.**
3. **Gradually increase academic and sport-specific activity under individualized plan. Reduce or stop if symptoms return.**
4. **Continue gradual increase and specific training drills without body contact. Reduce or stop if symptoms return.**
5. **Resume academic and training drills – only once cleared by a physician.**
6. **Full academic and body contact training drills – only once cleared by a physician.**
7. **Full academic activity and game play.**

**IMPORTANT: Allow 24 hours to complete each step. If symptoms appear at any step, STOP activity, wait 24-48 hours, and resume activity at previous step.**

#### Sources:

Burden Of Concussion In British Columbia, 2013 | Download Report  
Parachute | <http://www.parachutecanada.org>  
BC Research Injury & Prevention Unit (BCIRPU) Injury Hospitalizations Data Tool | <http://www.injuryresearch.bc.ca>  
US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Mayo Clinic