



Catasauqua Area School District Athletic Department Concussion Protocol & Guidelines



The health and safety of our student athletes are everyone's responsibility. For this reason, the Catasauqua Area School District has made it a priority to further educate you and your child on Sport Related Concussions (SRC), how they occur, the symptoms, evaluation and treatment of concussions and the process your child will go through should he/she sustain a concussion while participating in CASD athletics.

What is a concussion?

An SRC is a type of traumatic brain injury that is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain.

Signs and symptoms of an SRC may include one or more of the following:

Headache	Nausea	Vomiting
Dizziness	Lightheadedness	Confusion
ringing in the ears	Poor Coordination/Balance	Difficulty Remembering
Difficulty Concentrating	Sensitivity to light and/or noise	Delayed Responses
Fatigue	Fogginess	Irritability
Blurry and/or double vision	More emotional than normal	Feeling of in a fog

Every student athlete who is suspected to have sustained an SRC while participating in CASD athletics will be evaluated according to a protocol set forth by Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN). The protocol involves the following steps:

1. Full clinical evaluation by a medical professional (often initially by Licensed Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC)).
2. Determination of the appropriate course of treatment, including examination by a physician/concussion specialist within LVHN. Academic modifications and physical therapy might be prescribed by treating practitioner.
3. Gradual return to play progression.

If a student athlete is suspected of having a concussion the ATC should be notified immediately. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion will **NOT** be allowed to return to participation that same day. A full clinical evaluation will be done by the ATC the same day as injury or the next day/within 24 hours.

Consultation with Physician

After evaluation, the ATC will make contact with the clinical care coordinator at LVHN to schedule an office visit with a concussion specialist. During this time the ATC may provide limited academic modifications until a physician can provide further written directions.

Treatment of a concussion:

Following a concussion, it is important to allow the brain to rest. Both physical and cognitive (mental) rest are essential for recovery. In addition to plenty of sleep it is important to limit watching TV, playing video games, and using a computer, tablet or cell phone.

When is it safe to return to sport?

Return to participation depends on several factors:

1. The athlete must be symptom free for 48 hours. Returning to play too soon while still experiencing symptoms while the brain is still healing can put a student-athlete at risk of getting another concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs while the brain is still healing from the first injury is very serious and can have lifetime affects. It can even be fatal
2. Athlete must be cleared of all academic modifications.
3. Normal clinical examination.
4. Clearance to begin activity progression. (see below)

Return to sport (RTS) protocol

Return to sport progression is individualized and will be determined on a case by case basis. The progression involves at least a 24-48 hour period for each step. If symptoms return at any point during progression the athlete will not progress until symptoms resolve. Each step must be completed in its entirety with LVHN physician and ATC clearance prior to being cleared for full participation.

Step 1: Light aerobic exercise (stationary bike, elliptical)

Step 2: Moderate aerobic exercise (begin running program)

Step 3: Functional exercises (increase running, begin agilities, non-contact sport specific drills)

Step 4: Non-contact practice activities

Step 5: Full contact practice

Step 6: Full game participation

If an athlete is being treated by a family or non LVHN physician, the athlete's clearance to return to participation must be in accordance with the above criteria. Any clearance notes that conflict with the protocol set forth will NOT be accepted. Therefor it is recommended that you follow our protocol and treatment guidelines. Notes from the emergency room will NOT be accepted. All SRC require physician clearance and RTS protocol by AT, including those that take place at the end of the sports season. Failure to get proper clearance and complete the RTS protocol will disqualify a student athlete from the next season/sport until the protocol is completed.

Thank you for your assistance and understanding of the concussion protocol for the department of athletics at CASD. If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Catasauqua athletic trainers:

John Capozzolo	Phone: 610-360-1435	Email: John.Capozzolo@lvhn.org
Sara Smey	Phone: 610-739-9358	Email: Sara.Smey@lvhn.org
Chris Leavy	Phone: 610-762-4690	Email: Christopher_M.Leavy@lvhn.org

"I have read and understand the CASD Athletic Department Concussion Policy and Guidelines, including signs and symptoms, evaluation and treatment and the process of returning a student athlete to play after a concussion.

I understand that in order to participate in interscholastic athletics at the CASD, I must abide by the return to play guidelines set forth by the physicians at LVHN and the CASD Athletic Department.

I also agree to inform a CASD athletic trainer or athletic department if I am experiencing any signs or symptoms of a concussion or have sought physician evaluation for a suspected concussion."

Parent/Guardian Name Printed: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student-Athlete Name Printed: _____ **Date:** _____

Student-Athlete Signature _____ **Grade:** _____