

GEAR UP AGAINST TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

August is Neurosurgery Awareness Month!

Join the national awareness and learn how you can educate your patients on how to prevent and detect Traumatic Brain Injury in athletes.

To prevent injury, athletes perform specific stretches and exercises, wear safety gear and follow instruction from the coach. There is one injury that is increasingly common and life-threatening – traumatic brain injury (TBI).

01 | Concussions & TBI

According to the CDC, a concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury 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 rapidly back and forth. There are three grades of concussions:

- **Mild (Grade 1)** – sudden confusion but no lack of consciousness
- **Moderate (Grade 2)** – amnesia occurs with or without loss of consciousness
- **Severe (Grade 3)** – loss of consciousness for any length of time.

02 | Detection

When it comes to TBI and concussion recognition, it is important not only to be aware of symptoms reported by the patient, but also the indicators detected by anyone who witnessed the event. For instance, the athlete may complain of headache, nausea, dizziness, or confusion; whereas an attentive teammate or parent may notice mood or behavior changes, slow response to questions, clumsy movements or brief loss of consciousness. No warning sign should be ignored and medical attention should be sought immediately.

03 | Playing It Safe

How can concussions and TBI be prevented? While injuries cannot be prevented entirely, adopting these suggestions can greatly reduce the risk of brain injury:

- Follow the coach's rules for safety
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times
- Wear proper, well-maintained protective equipment that fits properly
- Wear a well-fitted helmet made specifically for the sport

04 | Final Thoughts

Research indicates that the greatest risk is associated with repetitive head impacts rather than a single blow to the head. Therefore, it is imperative that parents and coaches work together to prevent and detect TBI and seek immediate medical assistance when any symptoms are present, thus preventing long-term issues such as memory, speech, behavior and vision problems.

For additional information, please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/?HeadsUp/>

***Did You Know?
1 in 5 high school athletes
will sustain a sports
concussion during the
season***

References

<http://www.momsteam.com/health-safety/seven-ways-to-reduce-risk-of-brain-trauma-in-contact-and-collision-sports>

http://www.headcasecompany.com/concussion_info/stats_on_concussions_sports

<http://brainconnection.brainhq.com/2000/06/03/brain-injuries-high-school-athletes-at-risk/>