

# Heads Up: Concussion

Each year, U.S. emergency departments (EDs) treat an estimated 173,285 sports and recreation related traumatic brain injuries, including concussions, among children and adolescents, from birth to 19 years. Concussions can occur in any sport or recreation activity. So, all coaches, parents, and athletes need to learn concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs.

## What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth.

Children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. CDC has created free tools for youth and high school sports coaches, parents, athletes, and health care professionals that provide important information on preventing, recognizing, and responding to a concussion.

### Symptoms of concussion usually fall into four categories:

 <b>Thinking/ Remembering</b>	 <b>Physical</b>	 <b>Emotional/ Mood</b>	 <b>Sleep</b>
Difficulty thinking clearly	Headache  Fuzzy or blurry vision	Irritability	Sleeping more than usual
Feeling slowed down	Nausea or vomiting (early on)  Dizziness	Sadness	Sleep less than usual
Difficulty concentrating	Sensitivity to noise or light  Balance problems	More emotional	Trouble falling asleep
Difficulty remembering new information	Feeling tired, having no energy	Nervousness or anxiety	

Some of these symptoms may appear right away, while others may not be noticed for days or months after the injury, or until the person starts resuming their everyday life and more demands are placed upon them.

### **Danger Signs in Adults**

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. Contact your health care professional or emergency department right away if you have any of the following danger signs after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body:

- Headache that gets worse and does not go away.
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination.
- Repeated vomiting or nausea.
- Slurred speech.

The people checking on you should take you to an emergency department right away if you:

- Look very drowsy or cannot be awakened.
- Have one pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other.
- Have convulsions or seizures.
- Cannot recognize people or places.
- Are getting more and more confused, restless, or agitated.
- Have unusual behavior.
- Lose consciousness (*a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously and the person should be carefully monitored*).

### **Danger Signs in Children**

Take your child to the emergency department right away if they received a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, and:

- Have any of the danger signs for adults listed above.
- Will not stop crying and cannot be consoled.
- Will not nurse or eat.

---

## Social & New Media

---

The CDC Injury Center uses social media to provide users with access to credible, science-based injury information when, where, and how you want it.



[facebook.com/cdcheadsup](https://facebook.com/cdcheadsup)

Share your stories with other brain injury survivors, family members and caregivers.

**Learn more >>**



[twitter.com/CDCInjury](https://twitter.com/CDCInjury)



[YouTube](#)

**Resources:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/schools.html>

<http://www.sportconcussionlibrary.com/content/concussion-information-parents>

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/pdf/Parent Athlete Info Sheet-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/pdf/Parent_Athlete_Info_Sheet-a.pdf)