



Concussion Facts

What is concussion?

Concussion refers to a disturbance in brain function caused by a direct or indirect force to the head.

It results in temporary loss of brain skills such as memory and thinking.

Usually the changes are temporary and the majority of people recover completely if managed correctly.

Concussion does not involve structural damage or any permanent injury to the brain.

How common is concussion?

Concussion is a common problem in many sports especially those involving body contact, collision or high speed.

In Australia, common participation sports such as Australian Rules Football, rugby league and rugby union have high rates of concussion. Concussion is also highly associated with soccer, cricket, netball, martial arts and equestrian.

Concussion is **more** common in children than any other age group.

What about Recovery?

The process of recovery varies from person to person and injury to injury. In most cases (80-90%), recovery occurs within 10-14 days of injury, however in a small number of cases recovery is delayed over weeks to months.

Are there any complications?

In general complications are not common.

The risk of complication is increased by allowing a player to return to play before they have recovered.

That is why it is important to recognise concussion and keep the player out of training and competition until they have fully recovered.

What are the complications following concussion?

- Higher risk of injury or repeated concussion on return to play
- Prolonged symptoms (lasting more than 14 days)
- Depression and other mental health issues
- Severe brain swelling (particularly in young players)
- Long term damage to brain function



Department of
Sport and Recreation