



The Top Misconceptions about Concussions

1. "If I have a concussion, I will have a headache".
False. Many serious symptoms of concussions are unfelt, unseen, and not immediately apparent. Any blow, impact or whiplash action to the body or the head needs to be evaluated and again, perhaps, later in the practice/game, at home, or even the next day. Many serious symptoms of concussions are unfelt and unseen.
2. "The parent or coach can decide if the player is fine, and can keep playing".
False. Most parents and many coaches are not trained in identifying symptoms of potential concussions. Every player with a suspected concussion needs to be taken to a qualified healthcare provider for evaluation, and player cleared before returning to participation.
3. "Concussions aren't a 'real' head injury".
False. Actually, concussions are among the worst of all possible head injuries because most of them are not properly identified and treated. When a concussion is left untreated, the likelihood that another concussion can occur and be even more damaging is very high, because the brain has not properly recovered from the first one.
4. "They wear padded helmets; that's enough".
False. Over 40% of concussions occur from (1) hits to the body, or (2) the concussion occurs before the player even hits the ice.
5. Getting your "bell rung" is normal; be proud of it.
False.and "seeing stars" is not cool—it's a really bad sign. Sadly, the people who should most understand when a concussion might have occurred are the last people to properly interpret it.
6. "I can't have a concussion; I can't let my team down".
False. Players (and parents, coaches, managers and officials) need to be trained to put player safety above all else. It would really be letting the team down if a player was out for a whole season—or longer—because a concussion was not properly diagnosed. The earlier a player is treated, the faster he/she will be able to return to play.
7. "If concussions were a big deal, there would be a law of some kind".
Actually, there is. AB25 was passed in the state of California on October 4, 2011. AB25 requires all public schools that offer athletic programs to immediately remove from a school-sponsored athletic activity for the remainder of the day an athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during that activity. The bill prohibits the return of the athlete to that activity until he or she is evaluated by, and receives written clearance from, a licensed health care provider, as specified. The bill requires, on a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet to be signed and returned by the athlete and the athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete initiates practice or competition."