



Des Moines Warriors Homeschool Basketball Club

desmoineswarriors.org

Concussion Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of the Des Moines Warriors concussion policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for parents, coaches, and administrators involved in Warriors activities when dealing with head injuries and concussions to help protect the health and safety of our players. All parents, coaches, and administrators involved in Warriors activities shall be informed of and be expected to follow this policy.

Definition and Awareness:

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that may be caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly. The sudden movement of the head may result in a disruption of the brain's normal function, and the player may display a wide range of signs or symptoms, including but not limited to: dizziness, a feeling of "fogginess," loss of balance or coordination, loss of memory, confusion, altered vision, headache, nausea, or emotional disturbance, among others.

On rare occasions loss of consciousness may occur, but this sign does not need to be present for a concussion to have occurred. Signs and symptoms may be immediately apparent, or may be subtle and not present for hours or even days. Concussions are very common in all sports involving physical activity, including basketball, and concussions occur commonly in both boys and girls.

The effects of a concussion may be mild or severe, short lived or chronic, and every athlete responds differently to different episodes. It is clear a concussion is a potentially serious injury with potentially serious effects. Therefore, it is critical that every effort is made to recognize and handle these incidents appropriately, and more importantly, to prevent these incidents from happening in the first place.

More information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/recognize.html>

Recognition and Response:

Any parent or coach shall have the freedom to express concern for, or suspicion of, a concussion. If any parent or coach reasonably suspects an athlete has experienced a concussion or significant head trauma, they are encouraged to promptly communicate this concern to another appropriate party, most likely another adult present at the sporting event, and most certainly the parents of the player, if accessible. In such an instance, we recommend that these persons exercise caution and remove the athlete from play immediately, and keep the athlete out of play for the remainder of the activity, whether a practice or game. However, specific diagnosis and management decisions must not be made by players, parents, coaches or administrators.

Parents of any athlete suspected of suffering a concussion should have the athlete evaluated by a health care professional experienced in concussion diagnosis and management. Return to play decisions must be managed by this professional and the athlete's parents, and not a coach or administrator.

Coaches shall not pressure an athlete or parents to return to play. If an athlete is known by the coach to have suffered from a concussion, the coach should not allow such athlete to return to play without direction or approval from the athlete's parent(s) or legal guardian.

Prevention:

The most effective approach to concussions is prevention of these episodes from occurring in the first place. Basketball is a fast and highly physical activity, which may lead to risk of head injury. All Warriors coaches are encouraged to take reasonable steps to minimize the risk of head injuries.

Training:

Included in the reasonable steps for Warriors coaches, the program expects coaches to complete a CDC training course each season (see link below).

Conclusion:

While impossible to eliminate concussions, it is possible to significantly reduce the risk and severity of these injuries. Reducing the risk of concussions requires a continuum of techniques and efforts on the part of all parties involved in athletic activities, and we encourage all participants, parents and coaches to familiarize themselves with these safeguards.

Other Resources:

More information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/response.html>

Online Training Course for Coaches:
http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html