



# St. Jude's Football Club

## Concussion Policy

It is of high priority that St. Jude's Football Club (SJFC) maintains a safe environment that reduces the risk of concussions, as the following protocols will adhere to this.

### Player's acknowledgements:

- Respect the rules of the sport
- Participate in fair play
- Avoid activities that can result in a high risk of concussion
- Players can be removed from SJFC programs if suspected of violating safe play

### Players and Coaches must understand the following

- A concussion is a brain injury that affects brain function. The injury can have consequences in both the short term and long term, therefore must be taken seriously.
- All suspected concussions must be treated as if it was a serious injury, and must not be dismissed under any circumstance.
- If a player is suspected of having experienced a concussion, they must be escorted from the game or practice immediately.
- Mistreated concussions or the dismissal of potential concussions can lead to further injury.
- In the case of removal due to concussion, full medical clearance is required to return to play.
- If an activity is witnessed that may be indicative of high risk for concussion, it should be reported to parents or coaches immediately.
- If a player suspects themselves of having a concussion, they should report their potential injury to parents or coaches, regardless of severity.
- Players must be responsible and take an adequate amount of time to recover according to what medical professionals have advised.

### Signs of Concussions

- Cannot recall events prior to or after a hit or fall
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Lose consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

## Symptoms of Concussions

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Confusion, concentration or memory problems
- Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down

## Special Cases

- If a player is believed to experience an injury involving their neck, they should not be moved or escorted until emergency medical professionals are present and able to do so. If this requirement is not met, it can lead to further injury.

## Considerations for Coaches

- Coaches should adhere to a safe and comfortable environment that will encourage players to speak up if they believe something is wrong.
- Coaches should never dismiss a player’s concern for another player’s, or their own, injuries.
- Injuries sustained to the head can be of great severity, meaning coaches must treat any reported instance of a head injury with great attention.
- The suspension or pausing of a practice or game may be necessary to ensure the safety of the players involved.
- If a player is observed to be playing in a dangerous manner, they must be warned, and if continued, suspended from participation.
- Emergency line 9-1-1 must be contacted if a multitude of concussion symptoms or signs are observed.
- The information about the incident leading to the concussion of a player must be recorded.

## Player’s Steps following a Concussion:

**Stage 0:** No exercise or activities, as the concussed player must rest for approximately 1-2 days.

**Stage 1:** Only activities that do not provoke symptoms can be completed until the player’s symptoms are no longer present.

**Stage 2:** No soccer or gym training, but light exercise such as walking, jogging, or swimming at a slow to moderate pace. These activities can only be completed for a maximum of 15 minutes at a time.

**Stage 3:** Simple soccer training activities can be completed with the exemption of headers and any activity inclusive of rapid head movement. These activities should not be done for over 45 minutes.

**Stage 4:** Increased intensity is encouraged with the remaining exemption of any head related activities (headers). Goalkeepers should avoid diving or tending when a ball may come in contact with their head. Resistance training and gym workouts can be completed during this stage for a period up to an hour.

**Stage 5:** Full-activity practice is allowed at this stage to allow coaches to evaluate the performance of the concussed player.

**Stage 6:** Return to normal gameplay.