

## Concussion Management

Dr. Shruti Sharma, DC is a certified concussion management and rehabilitation provider. The program she offers follows that of SHIFT protocols and is often combined with chiropractic, acupuncture or nutritional interventions to enhance your recovery and performance.

Concussion management programs can include:

- Computerized testing to assess and track your progress
- Baseline testing – great for pre-season evaluations (get your whole team tested!)
- Post-concussion testing and Re-assessments
- In clinic and at home exercise and rehabilitation programs
- Referrals for collaborative care when necessary
- Nutritional support programs to speed up recovery

Concussions and related symptoms can vary for individuals. They occur due to direct trauma and indirect trauma to the head (hitting your head vs whiplash). Symptoms can also persist for months to years when suitable treatment hasn't been performed.

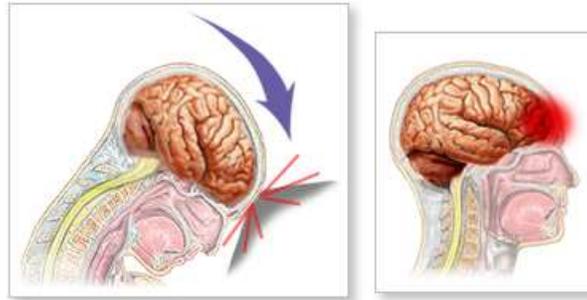
### Common Symptoms of a Concussion:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Neck pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Loss of balance or Poor coordination
- Trouble focusing on objects or words
- Poor concentration or Easily distracted
- Feeling “foggy”
- Confusion, Amnesia, or poor memory
- “flashing lights” or Seeing “stars”
- Blurred or double vision
- Irritability or emotional changes
- Ringing in the ears
- Slow to follow directions
- Decreased playing ability
- Vacant stare
- Drowsiness/fatigue
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Feeling “off” or not like oneself



## What Happens to your Brain During a Concussion?

A concussion is a violent jarring or shaking that results in a disturbance of brain function



ADAM.

During brain trauma with an acceleration and deceleration pattern, the nerve fibers within the brain are quickly stretched, resulting in neurotransmitters (chemical messengers within the brain) leaking in and out of the affected nerve cells. Due to these physical and physiological changes, an energy crisis occurs and the brain is unable to keep up with its normal demands. These changes can occur within minutes of trauma and can last up to days, before nerves return to normal. The neurotransmitter dysfunctions contribute to the physical, behavioural, emotional and cognitive signs and symptoms often present in a person following a concussion.

## What is the Recovery Timeframe after a Concussion?

Concussion related symptoms can resolve within days to weeks; however some individuals may experience symptoms for longer. Those at higher risk for delayed symptoms are:

- Children & adolescents
- Players who have suffered multiple concussions in a close timeframe
- Athletes experiencing persistent migraine-like headaches or a high symptom load
- Athletes with a history of migraine, depression, ADHD, learning disabilities or sleep disorders

Post-concussion syndrome is a diagnostic term used when symptoms persist for several weeks to months after the injury. When symptoms persist beyond 3-4 weeks it is important that proper medical assessment (or re-assessment) occurs. Working with a certified concussion management provider will help you learn modifications and rehabilitation strategies to overcome your symptoms.

## **What To Do If you Think You Have a Concussion**

### **STEP 1**

Notify someone that you may have had a concussion, as not to be left alone. Seek medical evaluation and do not return to play/work/school until cleared. Rest is the best approach for the first few days, including avoidance of screen time (computers, phones, and tv).

### **STEP 2**

Schedule an appointment to see a Medical Physician as soon as possible. It is not usually necessary to visit the emergency room unless your symptoms are severe and/or rapidly worsening. Get as much rest for your brain and body as you can, including napping as needed.

### **STEP 3**

Undergo medical evaluation. It may not require a CT, MRI or X-ray unless severe trauma or symptoms indicate.

### **STEP 4**

Visit one of the Shift Concussion Management clinics in your area for further assessment. If you have previously undergone baseline testing, repeat testing will demonstrate any areas that may be impaired due to the injury and will help guide management recommendations. If you have not previously undergone baseline testing, a follow-up assessment with one of our Health Professionals is still highly recommended.

### **STEP 5**

Follow any management recommendations given to you by your Physician and Shift Health Professional. These may include manual therapy (eg. for associated neck pain), specific rest strategies and home recommendations, modified school and/or work requirements, specialized rehabilitative techniques (eg. vision therapy), and other recovery strategies.

### **STEP 6**

Follow-up with the Health Professionals involved in your care so that your recovery is properly monitored. If you have been referred to multiple practitioners, make sure they are aware of who is involved in your case management.

Sources: <http://drshrutisharma.com/services/concussion-management/>  
<http://www.shiftconcussion.ca/resources/concussion-faqs/>