

Playground Safety Tips for PARENTS

HEADS UP CONCUSSION

As a parent, you play an important role in keeping your child safe on the playground. This sheet will help you learn how to spot a concussion and protect your child from concussion or other serious brain injury each time you take your child on an outdoor play adventure.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.

HOW CAN I HELP KEEP MY CHILD SAFE?

Playgrounds are important places for children to have fun, explore, and grow. Children learn through play and need opportunities to take risks, test their limits, and learn new skills through free play. Playgrounds can also put children at risk for concussion.

To help keep children safe:



On the playground, children are more likely to get a concussion or other serious brain injury when using:

1. Monkey Bars



2. Climbing Equipment



3. Swings¹



¹ Cheng T et al. Nonfatal playground-related traumatic brain injuries among children, 2001-2013. *Pediatrics*, 2015.



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Be HEADS UP on the Playground

HOW CAN I SPOT A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?

After a fall or a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, look for one or more of these signs and symptoms of a concussion:

Signs Observed by Parents

- 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.
- Loses consciousness (even briefly).
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.
- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall.

Symptoms Reported by Children

- 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, or concentration or memory problems.
- Just not "feeling right," or "feeling down."

If you see any of these signs or symptoms and think your child has a concussion, or other serious brain injury, seek medical attention right away. Remember, signs and symptoms may show up right after the injury, or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury. While most children with a concussion feel better within a couple of weeks, some will have symptoms for months or longer.

WHAT ARE SOME MORE SERIOUS DANGER SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR?

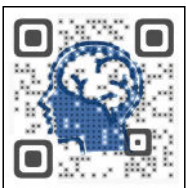
In rare cases, a dangerous collection of blood (hematoma) may form on the brain after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and can squeeze the brain against the skull. Call 9-1-1 or ensure that the child is taken to the emergency department right away if, after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he or she has one or more of these danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other.
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up.
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away.
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination.
- Repeated vomiting or nausea, convulsions, or seizures (shaking or twitching).
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation.
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out). Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.



How can you help your child lower their chance of getting a concussion?

Plan ahead. ✓



You can download the CDC **HEADS UP** app to get concussion information at your fingertips. Just scan the QR code pictured at left with your smartphone.

The information provided in this fact sheet or through linkages to other sites is not a substitute for medical or professional care. Questions about diagnosis and treatment for concussion should be directed to your physician or other health care provider.



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To learn more, go to www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP