

CONCUSSION POLICY

Concussion Policy of the TMEC Triton Swim Club

PURPOSE

The TMEC Triton Swim Club, in partnership with USA Swimming and Southern California Swimming (SCS), are responsible for providing a proactive environment regarding the assessment of risks, adopting guidelines and meeting educational requirements. TMEC is aware of the growing concern regarding concussion management in youth sports and will provide its members the most up to date and thorough process for recognizing, treating and rehabilitating a concussion. The primary goal of the concussion policy is to reduce the risk of harm to athletes and to educate coaches, parents, and athletes on the importance of concussion management.

DEFINITION

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define concussion as “a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works.” Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. The Zurich Conference on Concussion in Sport also states that concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously. However, symptoms and signs may evolve over a number of minutes to hours or in some cases may be even more prolonged.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Athletes do not have to be “knocked out” to have a concussion. In fact, less than 1 out of 10 concussions result in loss of consciousness. Concussion symptoms can develop right away or up to 48 hours after the injury. Ignoring signs or symptoms can put an athlete’s health at risk!

Signs Observed by Coaches, Officials, Parents or Guardians

- Appears dazed, stunned or confused
- Unsure about event, location, or name of meet
- Forgets an instruction or assignment
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior or personality changes – irritability, sadness, nervousness, emotional
- Can’t recall events before or after incident

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Any headache or “pressure” in head - how badly it hurts does not matter
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness

- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"
- Trouble falling asleep
- Sleeping more or less than usual

ADOPTION OF GUIDELINES SET FORTH BY USA SWIMMING

To coincide with the recommendations of USA Swimming, TMEC will adopt the following procedures in relation to concussion management. All athletes, coaches, and parents will receive both the TMEC Tritons Concussion Policy and USA Swimming Concussion Information Sheet relating to concussions on an annual basis. Electronic communication of the USA Swimming Information Sheet is permitted under the recommended guidelines and will be the method in which TMEC disperses the policy and fact sheet. Parents are responsible for reading and acknowledging the TMEC Tritons Concussion Policy and USA Swimming Information Sheet annually. Any athlete exhibiting signs, symptoms, or is otherwise suspected of sustaining a concussion will be removed immediately from the water and will not return until evaluated and cleared by a licensed health care professional, trained and experienced in evaluating and management of concussions, acting within scope of practice. Compliance with all state and local laws dealing with concussion is the responsibility of the Club and/or LSC.

EVALUATION OF SWIMMER IN THE EVENT OF A HEAD STRIKE

In the event of any head strike reported by the swimmer or witnessed by parent(s), coach(es) or others present will result in all involved parties being removed from the water. The individual(s) will be evaluated by the coach(es) in conjunction with the TMEC Tritons Concussion Checklist. It should be understood that swimmers will only need to be removed from the water for physician evaluation if exhibiting signs or symptoms of a concussion. Parents should understand that TMEC coaches are not licensed physicians and will always error on the side of caution while exercising due diligence in evaluation. Additionally, parents should advise coach(es) of any observed signs or symptoms as they know their children best. TMEC coaches make the final decision for recommendation of physician evaluation. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed immediately of the head strike and coaches evaluation in relation to concussion signs and symptoms. Only swimmers who do not exhibit any signs or symptoms of concussion will be permitted to return to the water. Parents should be aware that concussion symptoms may not appear for many days and the athlete should be continually observed for any marked signs, symptoms or behavioral abnormalities. In the event that a swimmer shows signs or symptoms of a concussion during coach evaluation, they will not be permitted to return to the water for any TMEC related meets and/or practice sessions until receiving a proper medical release.

RETURNING TO THE POOL

Any TMEC swimmer who is suspected of sustaining a concussion during an event, is barred from returning to practice or competition until they are evaluated and cleared by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, acting within the scope of his or her practice. Guardians must obtain a proper release from a licensed physician in written form. Coaches will review the documentation and clear the swimmer for all swimming activities.