



South Lake Star

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Appointment Line
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southlakepediatrics.com

Concussions in Athletes

By John Paulson, MD

Each year about 62,000 athletes suffer a concussion, a disturbance in brain function after a blow to the head. In 10% of the cases, there may be loss of consciousness after the head injury. Usually there is a temporary change in mental status, so the athlete may be dazed, confused, forgetful or have a headache, vomiting, change in vision or a hard time concentrating. This may be followed by an initial increase in sleep and then later a decrease in sleep, concentration and memory problems, and sometimes depression. How long the symptoms last is more important than what the symptoms are in predicting the outcome for the athlete.

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H1N1 Flu Update

Following the Center for Disease Control and Minnesota Department of Health guidelines, we are immunizing all of our patients, their families and the general public. Please see our website www.SouthLakePediatrics.com for updated information.

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF H1N1: Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing. Wash your hands frequently. Stay home if you are sick.

Cold weather reminder



Remember in Minnesota we routinely live, work and play in temperatures lower than we'd tolerate for the meats we keep in our freezers! So, we must dress appropriately to prevent frost bite. This means wearing jackets, gloves, mittens, hats, and limiting time spent outside on below zero days. Also, remember metal conducts heat and cold, so be careful when handling metal objects outdoors.

Signs of frostbite include skin going from pink to white or blue. Skin may feel cold, stiff or rubbery. Skin may be tingling, numb or painful. Areas most vulnerable to frostbite are the nose, cheeks, ears, fingers and toes. If any of this occurs, immediately go inside to a warm (not hot) area, out of the wind. Warm water can slowly warm up the skin, but don't rub the area. An evaluation by your clinician is advised if skin does not warm up within 30 minutes, remains blue, white or hard, or blisters develop.

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After a concussion, the brain gets a little swollen. If there is a second concussion before the first one resolves, there may not be enough room inside the hard skull to accommodate more swelling. This can lead to serious injury or even death. **A concussion MUST be allowed to resolve before an athlete can return to sports to prevent more serious brain injury.**

After a concussion, the athlete **CANNOT** continue to play in that game. At home, minimize brain stimulation from television, video games, and loud music. Even school work may need to be modified.

To determine when it is safe to return to play, **ImPACT TESTING*** is recommended. This is a 20 minute computerized test of memory and concentration. The cost is about \$5. We recommend a preseason baseline test for comparison. If you have a middle school or high school athlete, discuss this with your clinician. If no individual baseline testing is done, there are still standard results available for comparison.

An athlete can return to play when symptoms have resolved completely, both at rest and with exercise, and the ImPACT testing has returned to baseline. When properly managed, athletes can almost always safely return to play.

*For more information on the ImPACT test see www.gillettechildrens.org, search under ImPACT.

A hundred years from now
it will not matter what your bank account was,
the sort of house you lived in,
or the kind of clothes you wore,
but
the world may be much different
because you were important
in the life of a child.
Author Unknown

easyCARE Information



easyCARE

See clinicians you know and trust at your convenience, at a location and time that works best for you.

No appointment is needed for minor illnesses such as sore throats, earaches, rashes, pink eye, fever and minor injuries.

Minnetonka - 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Maple Grove - 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Plymouth - 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Children's West - 8:30 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Eden Prairie - 8:30 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

St. Louis Park** - 8:30 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. till 5 p.m. Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri

**St. Louis Park office is closed on Tuesdays