



# Smoky Valley

## Concussion and Head Injury Release Form



**This form must be signed by all student athletes and parent/guardians before the student participates in any athletic or spirit practice or contest each school year.**

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

<b>Symptoms may include one or more of the following:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• “Pressure in head”</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Neck pain</li> <li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li> <li>• Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision</li> <li>• Sensitivity to light or noise</li> <li>• Feeling sluggish or slowed down</li> <li>• Feeling foggy or groggy</li> <li>• Drowsiness</li> <li>• Change in sleep patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amnesia</li> <li>• “Don’t feel right”</li> <li>• Fatigue or low energy</li> <li>• Sadness</li> <li>• Nervousness or anxiety</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• More emotional</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)</li> <li>• Repeating the same question/comment</li> </ul>
<b>Signs observed by teammates, parents, and coaches include:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appears dazed</li> <li>• Vacant facial expression</li> <li>• Confused about assignment</li> <li>• Forgets plays</li> <li>• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li> <li>• Moves clumsily or displays incoordination</li> <li>• Answers questions slowly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slurred speech</li> <li>• Shows behavior or personality changes</li> <li>• Can’t recall events prior to hit</li> <li>• Can’t recall events after hit</li> <li>• Seizures or convulsions</li> <li>• Any change in typical behavior or personality</li> <li>• Loses consciousness</li> </ul>

### **What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns to soon?**

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one (second impact syndrome). This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athlete will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete’s safety.

## **If You Think Your Child Has Suffered a Concussion**

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without written medical clearance from a Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO). Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it is better to miss one game than miss the whole season. **When in doubt, the athlete sits out!**

### **Cognitive Rest & Return to Learn**

The first step to concussion recovery is cognitive rest. This is essential for the brain to heal. Activities that require concentration and attention such as trying to meet academic requirements, the use of electronic devices (computers, tablets, video games, texting, etc.), and exposure to loud noises may worsen symptoms and delay recovery. Students may need their academic workload modified while they are initially recovering from a concussion. Decreasing stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time. This may involve staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened school schedule, gradually increasing to normal. Any academic modifications should be coordinated jointly between the student's medical providers and school personnel. No consideration should be given to returning to physical activity until the student is fully integrated back into the classroom setting and is symptom free. Rarely, a student will be diagnosed with post-concussive syndrome and have symptoms that last weeks to months. In these cases, a student may be recommended to start a non-contact physical activity regimen, but this will only be done under the direct supervision of a healthcare provider.

### **Return to Practice and Competition**

The Kansas School Sports Head Injury Prevention Act provides that if an athlete suffers, or is suspected of having suffered, a concussion or head injury during a competition or practice, the athlete must be immediately removed from the competition or practice and cannot return to practice or competition until a Health Care Professional has evaluated the athlete and provided a written authorization to return to practice and competition. The KSHSAA recommends that an athlete not return to practice or competition the same day the athlete suffers or is suspected of suffering a concussion. The KSHSAA also recommends that an athlete's return to practice and competition should follow a graduated protocol under the supervision of the health care provider (MD or DO).

### **Impact Concussion Testing**

Impact concussion testing software is a tool used to help evaluate concussions. It is one of many tools used to determine return to play criteria for student athletes. Impact is not a tool for the diagnosing of concussions. Normal Impact scores do not alone determine return to play.

Any student athlete wishing to participate during any sport season is required to have an Impact baseline test on file before participating in practice or an event. Smoky Valley pays for this testing and will be able to administer the baseline test for our student-athletes. This testing occurs early in the school year and may be conducted later in the year also. Once a student's baseline test is on file, updated baseline testing will be available every other year through your school years at Smoky Valley (Most students will do the testing in grades 7, 9, 11). Your results will be shared with your medical provider through the Impact System.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

For concussion information and educational resources collected by the KSHSAA, go to:

<http://www.kshsaa.org/Public/General/ConcussionGuidelines.cfm>

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Student-athlete Name Printed

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Student-athlete Signature

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Date

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Parent or Legal Guardian Printed

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Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date