



Balgowlah Suns Concussion Management Protocols 2021

CONCUSSION POLICY

As a background to the policy the following information has been extracted from the AFL's Concussion Management Guidelines:

<https://www.afl.com.au/clubhelp/policies/health-and-safety/concussion-management>

THE GUIDELINES

Head impacts can be associated with serious and potentially fatal brain injuries. In the early stages of injury, it is often not clear whether you are dealing with a concussion or there is a more severe underlying structural head injury. For this reason, the most important steps in initial management include:

- Recognising a suspected concussion
- Removing the player from the game
- Referring the player to a medical doctor for assessment.
- Where there is no medical doctor present to assess the player, or the diagnosis of concussion cannot be ruled out at the time of injury, the player must NOT be allowed to return to play in the same match / training session.

Any player who has suffered a concussion or is suspected of having a concussion must be medically assessed as soon as possible.

There should be an accredited first aider at every game and the basic rules of first aid should be used when dealing with any player who is unconscious or injured.

These guidelines outline the important steps for return to play following concussion including:

- A brief period of complete physical and cognitive rest (24-48 hours).
- A period of symptom-limited activity (e.g., reading, walking) to allow full recovery.
- A graded loading program (with monitoring).
- Clearance by a medical doctor (prior to returning to competitive contact sport / full contact training sessions).



Players should not enter the graded loading program until they have recovered from their concussion. Recovery means that all concussion-related symptoms and signs have fully resolved (for at least 24 hours) at rest and with activities of daily living, and they have successfully returned to work or school, without restrictions.

The guidelines have been developed to assist community football leagues, clubs, players, parents, coaches, trainers & other stakeholders on how to assess and manage any player who has suffered concussion or is suspected of having a concussion.

POLICY

Because of the possible long-term health effects of a concussion injury, the following steps are mandatory when a concussion injury has been determined as likely:

Please follow protocols as outlined in the [Management of Sport-Related Concussion in Australian Football Guidelines](#):

HOME GAME INCIDENTS

If the ground medic deems a knock to the head as a suspected concussion it is deemed a concussion and managed as so until a GP clears the player to return to play.

1. The affected player will take no further part in the game, and a professional medical assessment of the injury should be sought as soon as possible after the incident.
2. The first aid officer will complete an ["Injury Report Form"](#) detailing the incident and injury, along with walking the player through the HeadCheck Concussion Management App and emailing the outcome to the parent of the player. The Injury Report Form should then be returned with the match paperwork and a copy of the report emailed to the Vice-President at balgowlahsunsoffice@gmail.com to be uploaded to the Injury Report Register in Google Docs and an email sent to the Coach and Team Manager of the player advising of the incident.
3. At this stage the player's parent should be given the Balgowlah Suns "Concussion Management Pack" by the first aid officer that will include: The AFL Guidelines, Return to



Play Medical Clearance Form, Return to Play Checklist, relevant contact details and letter outlining the concussion management course of action.

4. The injured player will automatically not play or train for 12 days as per AFL guidelines.
5. [See Schedule 2](#) for Phases of Rest, Recovery and Return to Play following Concussion. It is important that both the Coach and the parent of the player understand the phases to ensure the player is able to fully recover before returning to play.
6. [Return to Play Following Concussion Checklist](#) must be completed for the player (onus on parent) and ALL answers to be YES, and sighted by the Coach and Vice-President before a player is able to return to play.
7. A medical clearance from a qualified Doctor must be sighted by the Vice-President and the Coach of the player before the player can return to play. [Form can be downloaded here.](#)
8. If a player sustains a second concussion injury during the same season, the same medical assessment and clearance requirements apply, but the player will be required to miss **3 weeks** before they can return to play.
9. In the event a player has a third concussion in the same season, a discussion about the player's welfare and any date of return to play in that season will be subject to a discussion between the player's parents, the team coach and manager, and the President of the SUNS, based upon professional medical advice.

AWAY GAME INCIDENTS

If the away ground medic deems a knock to the head as a suspected concussion it is deemed a concussion and managed as so until a GP clears the player to return to play.

10. The affected player will take no further part in the game, and a professional medical assessment of the injury should be sought as soon as possible after the incident.
11. The Team Manager should ensure the away ground first aid officer provides a copy of an **Injury Report** detailing the incident at the very least. If the HeadCheck app is used, the report should be forwarded to the parent at the time. The team Manager should email a copy of the Injury Report to the Vice-President at balgovlahsunsoffice@gmail.com to be uploaded to the Injury Report Register in Google Docs and an email sent to the Coach and Team Manager of the player advising of the incident.



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12. At this stage the player's parent should be emailed the Balgowlah Suns "Concussion Management Pack" by the VP that will include: The AFL Guidelines, Return to Play Medical Clearance Form, Return to Play Checklist, relevant contact details and letter outlining the concussion management course of action.
 13. The injured player will automatically not play or train for 12 days as per AFL guidelines.
 14. [See Schedule 2](#) for Phases of Rest, Recovery and Return to Play following Concussion. It is important that both the Coach and the parent of the player understand the phases to ensure the player is able to fully recover before returning to play.
 15. [Return to Play Following Concussion Checklist](#) must be completed for the player (onus on parent) and ALL answers to be YES, and sighted by the Coach and Vice-President before a player is able to return to play.
 16. A medical clearance from a qualified Doctor must be sighted by the Vice-President and the Coach of the player before the player can return to play. [Form can be downloaded here.](#)
 17. If a player sustains a second concussion injury during the same season, the same medical assessment and clearance requirements apply, but the player will be required to miss **3 weeks** before they can return to play.
 18. In the event a player has a third concussion in the same season, a discussion about the player's welfare and any date of return to play in that season will be subject to a discussion between the player's parents, the team coach and manager, and the President of the SUNS, based upon professional medical advice.

NOTE: Should a player sustain a suspected or diagnosed concussion in another sport, the onus is on the **parent** to:

1. Advise the player's SUNS coach, and follow the appropriate concussion guidelines as set by the sport involved and not send the child to SUNS training or play until a medical clearance is obtained. The player will be unable to attend training or return to play until a medical clearance has been sighted by the Coach and the Vice-President of the SUNS.