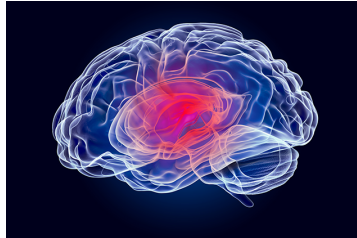


January is National Winter Sports Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month.

Many popular winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, ice skating, and even sledding can be high risk for concussion or serious brain injury. Every year, thousands of people are treated for head injuries associated with these winter activities, which can be serious or even fatal. Whether you are a parent, sports coach, student, or teacher, it is important to be able to recognize, respond to, and minimize the risk of concussion or other serious brain injury.



What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (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 rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around in the skull, damaging brain cells.

Prevent Concussions with Helmet Safety

A properly fitted helmet can reduce the risk of head injuries **by nearly half**.

Your child's helmet should fit properly and be:

- Well maintained
- Age appropriate
- Worn consistently and correctly
- Appropriately certified for use



Concussion Signs and Symptoms

Concussion Signs Observed

- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall.
- 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.

Signs and symptoms generally show up soon after the injury. However, you may not know how serious the injury is at first and some symptoms **may not show up for hours or days**. If your child or teen's concussion **signs or symptoms get worse, you should take him or her to the emergency department right away**.

Dangerous Signs & Symptoms

Call 9-1-1 right away, or take your child or teen to the emergency department if he or she has one or more of the following danger signs after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body:

- 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.



For more information about **recovering from a concussion**, click [here](#).