

Being active is lots of fun, and it helps keep you healthy! Sometimes when you're active, you can get hurt. Did you know it's possible to hurt your brain?

Hurting your brain is different than hurting other parts of your body. If you sprain your ankle, it will get swollen and red, but if you hurt your brain, you won't be able to see it, because it's inside your head! One kind of brain injury is called a concussion. One of the best ways to stay safe and healthy is to know how to prevent concussions, and what to do if you think you have one.

## YOUTH TIP

# Being Mindful About CONCUSSIONS

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is an injury to your brain. Any bump to the head, face or neck could cause a concussion. A concussion could also be caused by getting hit in the body in a way that moves your head sharply. Getting hit in the head with a ball, falling down onto the floor, or someone bumping into you too hard could cause a concussion. A concussion is a serious injury. Most people get better quickly, but it can affect how you think and feel, and might affect you for a long time.

## What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

### How you might feel:



- Headache

- Dizziness
- Throwing up or feeling like throwing up



- Blurry or double vision

- Ringing in your ears
- Tired
- "Don't feel right"



- Sensitive to light or sound

### Thinking Problems:

- Feeling really sad or angry
- Problems remembering things that happened right before you got hurt
- Feeling confused
- Problems concentrating

If you think that you, a friend, or another Scout has one or more of these symptoms, tell an adult as soon as possible. You should not be left alone if you have a concussion. You do not need to be knocked out to have a concussion.

## What to do if you think you have a concussion

**1** Stop playing

**2** Tell an adult, like your parent or Scouter

**3** Get checked by a doctor

**4** Rest and recover

# GETTING BETTER

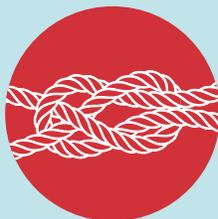
When you have a concussion, resting is the first step to getting better. You will have to stop doing things for a little bit, especially if they make you feel worse. This could include going to school, playing video games, listening to music or playing physical games.

As your brain heals, you will slowly start to go back to your usual activities. Scouts Canada has a system called **"Return to Play"** which will help you to slowly return to your usual activities, including Scouting. Each of these steps takes a different amount of time for everyone, but **each step should take at least 24 hours to complete**. Try to avoid spending time in front of a screen as you are healing, as they can cause you to become more tired and will make you take longer to heal.

It's important when recovering from a concussion that you do not do anything that makes you feel worse. It might be hard, but being patient is a key part of healing from a concussion. If you start to go back to activities too soon, it might make you feel worse and you may take longer to get better!



**STEP 1.** Stop all activity and commit to complete rest. Once you have been cleared by a doctor to start returning to activities, you can go to step 2.



**STEP 4.** You can slowly start to return to things like Scouting. You can attend meetings and practise skills that do not require too much movement or risk you getting hit in the head.



**STEP 2.** Light exercise, like walking, for 10–15 minutes at a time.



**STEP 5.** Once you have been cleared by a doctor, you can start to participate fully. If you start to feel any symptoms again, stop what you are doing and tell an adult right away.



**STEP 3.** More active exercise, like hiking, jogging or skating, for 20–30 minutes at a time. It's important that you do not do anything that could risk you getting hit (like hockey or karate).



**STEP 6.** Full return to activities.

What are some other activities that you need a helmet for?

## HELMETS

Wearing a helmet for certain activities is an important part of keeping your head safe. For activities like biking, skateboarding, skating or sledding, you should always wear a helmet. Make sure that it fits you! You should also make sure that your helmet is in good condition (not cracked or broken) and that you wear it properly.