



# NORTHCOTE JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

## Concussion policy

### Introduction

This policy has been produced to clarify the management of concussion. It is based on guidelines developed and released by the AFL Medical Officer's Association in a publication dated April 2011 and titled "The Management of Concussion in Australian Football". The welfare of a player is the club's priority and the club requires all team coaches, managers, runners, trainers and first aid providers to adhere to this policy.

### Management of concussion

#### On-field

For any player with loss of consciousness, basic first aid principles should be applied (i.e. airways, breathing, CPR). Care must also be taken with the player's neck which may have been injured in the collision. An ambulance should be called, and the player transported to hospital immediately for further assessment and management.

In the presence of any one or more of the following symptoms or physical signs, concussion should be suspected and the player **must be removed immediately from the ground** and assessed by either a qualified first aid provider or a registered medical doctor, if present:

- headache
- dizziness
- loss of consciousness
- confusion
- memory problems
- balance problems
- abnormal behaviour

#### Off-field

Upon assessment of the player, the team's first-aid official must:

- If there are any factors present indicating the need for urgent hospital referral (e.g. confusion, vomiting, worsening headache, neck pain or spinal cord symptoms including numbness, tingling, weakness), **call for an ambulance** to have the player transmitted to hospital immediately.
- If there are no factors present indicating the need for urgent referral, **do not allow the player to return to play** but refer the player to a registered medical doctor for assessment (i.e. at the ground or a hospital emergency department).

In either case, the team's first-aid official must:

- Advise the coach that the player will not be returning to play in the game.
- Contact the player's parent/guardian in person if at the ground or otherwise by phone (the team manager is required to have a list of contact telephone numbers for each player's parent/guardian).
- Continually monitor the player until he is released into the care of ambulance personnel or the parent/guardian.

## **Concussion injury advice to player's parent/guardian**

The player's parent/guardian should be given the following advice:

- Seek immediate medical attention if you notice any change in behavior, vomiting, dizziness, worsening headache, double vision or excessive drowsiness.
- Ensure the player rests and avoids strenuous activity for at least 24 hours.
- No sleeping tablets.
- Use paracetamol or codeine for headache. Do not use aspirin or anti-inflammatory medication.
- Do not train or play sport until medically cleared.

## **Follow-up management**

Any concussed player must not be allowed to return to training/playing before having an explicit medical clearance to train/play.

In every case, the decision regarding the timing of return to training should be made by a registered medical doctor.