

Adelaide Hockey Club Concussion statement

The Adelaide Hockey Club are aware of the growing concern in Australia about sports related head trauma and concussion and the potential ramifications for the future health of players. Our position statement ensures that the well-being and safety of all our players is paramount. We are guided by the Concussion in Sport Position Statement from the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and adopt the "If in doubt, sit them out" guideline for when players, coaches, parents, and support staff are unfamiliar with Concussion symptoms and management. We will manage all instances of head trauma and concussion with caution and follow a conservative management approach, in particular players under the age of 19, where the risk of prolonged recovery and permanent damage is heightened. The Adelaide Hockey Club have implemented the Hockey Australian Head trauma and Concussion protocol and flow chart, for coaches and managers, to guide them when determining a player should sit out or seek medical advice, after an injury occurs. A Concussion officer will record the injury and follow up with the player/parent to ensure that the appropriate treatment and management of the injury has occurred and a safe return to sport plan is enacted.

Head Injury and Concussion Policy

This policy aims to ensure all players with a head injury or suspected concussion receives appropriate and timely advice and treatment to support them to return safely to daily activities and their chosen sport of Hockey.

This policy supports players, coaches, officials, managers and support staff to demonstrate an understanding and awareness of the following:

- Identify and manage a head injury.
- Recognise concussion.
- Seek medical attention for further treatment and management of concussion.
- Manage a timed and safe return to participation in sport.

For the health and safety of the players at the club, everyone involved must take steps to reduce the risks and prevent an incident of poor management of a head injury to occur. Key steps to ensure safety are as follows:

- Educate players, parents, coaches, and support staff on the recognition of a head injury and the signs of concussion.
- Gather information around the event that lead up to the head injury and potential concussion.
- Ensure a culture of removing the player from the game when a suspected concussion has occurred
- Report the event and injury to the designated concussion officer, who is responsible for adherence to the policy and injury recording.

Concussion education

Up to date, evidence-based information should be provided at the commencement of every sport season to players, parents, officials, coaches, and support staff. Concussion awareness education should cover:

- The causes, signs and symptoms of concussion
- What to do if a player has a head injury or suspected concussion
- When to seek medical treatment
- Return to sport clearance requirements
- Head injury and concussion flow chart
- Reporting of an injury at club level

The Adelaide Hockey club will educate and support the community to recognise and manage head injuries and concussions:

Coaches and Managers

- Watch carefully for immediate signs of concussion
- Take the approach of- “In doubt, sit out”
- Follow the Head injury and concussion flow chart
- Ensure the player has a responsible adult to accompany them home
- Complete the head injury and concussion report form

Players and parents

- Watch carefully for immediate and delayed signs and symptoms of concussion
- Seek medical attention for review of player symptoms
- Seek a safe return to sport, medical clearance
- Follow the Australian Institute of Sports recommendations for 2-week exclusion of sport for athletes under 19 years

Designated concussion officer

The concussion officer is responsible for the head injury and concussion policy and flow chart procedure. It is important that they provide support for a communication strategy at the commencement of the sport season, to educate and implement the head injury and concussion awareness education. The concussion officer:

- Receives the head injury and concussion report form
- Maintain the injury register with details of players and injuries
- Ensures medically deemed concussed players follow appropriate protocols and medical assessments when resuming sport participation

Game day management.

Should a head injury occur and there is not a medical practitioner at the venue, the coach/manager should follow the Hockey Australia Head injury and concussion flow chart provided in the coach/manager's kit. A "If in doubt, sit out" guideline should be enacted.

If the player displays immediate signs and symptoms of concussion, the player should be requested to sit out and removed from the game. A referral to a medical professional for assessment should take priority.

Referral for a Medical Assessment

Managing a head injury or concussion is a shared responsibility between the player, parent coach, manager, and sporting club. The club adopts an open disclosure and communication approach to the management of concussion. All players that have a head injury or suspected concussion must be assessed by a medical professional prior to returning to play.

- If the medical professional determines a player is not concussed, the player can resume participation as soon as they feel ready. Evidence of this is required for return to sport.
- If a medical professional determines a player is concussed, the club will adopt the return to sport recommendations documented by the medical professional.