

Sacramento Valley **PLAY IT SAFE** Concussion Care Consortium

"Concussion management is a team effort"



Frequently Asked Questions

**Call today to get started:
(916) 474-6244
or (888) 857-9504**

What is the Sacramento Valley Play It Safe Concussion Care Consortium?

The Sacramento Valley Play It Safe Concussion Care Consortium is a unique collaboration between Wells Fargo Insurance Services, Kaiser Permanente, Mercy, Sutter Health, and UC Davis Health Systems. Our goals are to improve identification and management of sports related concussions and increase access to medical services for young athletes.

What is a concussion?

You can't see a concussion. A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. They can range from mild to severe and disrupt the way the brain normally works. A concussion can occur with or without loss of consciousness and they affect people differently.

What is baseline testing and why do I need it?

If you play sports you are at increased risk of incurring a sports-related concussion. Multiple concussions over time or a second concussion before the first one has healed can cause long-lasting problems that can affect performance in school, work, and social relationships. Here are some statistics:

- At least 10% of all contact sport athletes sustain concussions yearly.
- An athlete who sustains a concussion is 4-6 times more likely to sustain a second concussion.
- Up to 85% of concussions are not reported.

Using a computerized exam called ImpACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) we are able to establish a preseason baseline of cognitive abilities. This 20-30 minute test tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration. It is simple and set up like a video game. This is the same test that is used in the NFL, NHL, MLB, and many college athletic programs.

Does baseline testing need to be repeated?

Yes, baseline reassessments should be completed during the 7th, 9th and 11th grades.

If I have a concussion how is the ImpACT test used to treat it?

Athletes take the test prior to the season and if the athlete is believed to have suffered a concussion they re-take the exam to help determine the extent of the injury and if the injury has healed. This information is shared with treating physician(s) so that a sound decision can be made as to when return-to-play is appropriate and safe. Testing can be completed as early as 24-hours post-injury or

when the athlete appears to be symptom-free. However, return to play decisions are not based solely on ImpACT test results. It is one component of appropriate concussion management.

"I feel fine. I don't need to take that test."

Even if you feel "normal", you may still have symptoms that can be detected by the ImpACT test. Returning to play, or even some normal daily activities, before your brain has healed is dangerous. You put yourself at risk for longer recovery, permanent brain damage, and in rare cases death. Missing one or two games is hard, we know, but one game is not worth missing the whole season or ending your athletic career.

What should I do if I have a concussion?

Each health care system will have its own protocol for managing concussions. As part of the Play It Safe Concussion Care Consortium, you will receive a contact number indicating who you should call if you have questions. In general, even if you have been seen in the Emergency Department, make an appointment with your primary care physician as soon as possible after sustaining a concussion. Your doctor may then refer you to a specialist for follow-up ImpACT testing or wait until you are symptom free before making that referral.

Kaiser Permanente

Make an appointment with your primary care physician (PCP) as soon as possible. If the athlete goes to the ER, they should still make an appointment with their PCP within 24 hours. The PCP will then make a referral to Neuropsychology for post-concussion testing. For questions contact the Youth Sports Concussion Program at (916) 771-7628.

Mercy Neurological Institute

Make an appointment with your primary care physician (PCP) as soon as possible and contact Mercy's Home and Community Program at (916) 453-7926 to facilitate a referral for post-concussion testing. If athletes go to the ER, they should still make an appointment with their PCP within 24 hours. For questions, please contact the Home and Community Program.

Sutter Health

Make an appointment with a neuroscience clinician as soon as possible. If the athlete goes to the ER, they should still make an appointment with a neuroscience clinician within 24 hours. For questions and appointments, please call (916) 454-6667.

UCD Health System

Make an appointment with the Department of Sports Medicine by calling (916) 734-6805.

