

Booking Agents and Officials:

The last two (2) years the NFHS has been clear in its emphasis on concussion management. The NFHS Rules Power Points have all highlighted this, and the SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION is included as an appendix in all rule books. There is a new North Carolina state law that mandates how athletes are to be treated by appropriate athletic training and licensed medical personnel. I am giving you this information as a re-emphasis on the seriousness regarding concussions and our responsibilities as officials. Coaches are also being reminded regarding the guidelines of return-to-play procedures they must follow before allowing the athlete to return to the contest.

As an official, if you observe or sense an athlete may be compromised, you are to guide/indicate (to) the athlete and the head coach to remove the athlete from the contest for them to "take a look" at the athlete. At that time, your responsibility for the athlete is complete. You are not a trained medical person who is responsible for diagnosing concussions. But, we do want you to be aware of the symptoms which may indicate an athlete has sustained a concussion (defined as a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function). The symptoms as listed by the NFHS Rules are as follows:

- Headache
- Fogginess
- Difficulty concentrating
- Easily confused
- Slowed thought process
- Difficulty with memory
- Nausea
- Lack of energy, tiredness
- Dizziness, poor balance
- Blurred vision
- Sensitive to light and sounds
- Mood changes – irritable, anxious, or tearful
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes

Let's remember that the care and safety of our participants is always our number one guideline. The fact that a new state statute has been enacted indicates the public scrutiny regarding concussions and brain injury. I am giving you this information as we prepare for our upcoming seasons. I thank you in advance for your attention to this issue.

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Supervisor of Officials