TriNL Concussion Policy

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that can't be seen on routine X-rays, CT scans or MRIs. It affects the way a person may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms. Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that jars your head, could cause a concussion.

TRI NL

Concussions can occur in triathlons and should be taken seriously. Although they are not as common as in contact sports, they are still possible.

Some ways that concussion can happen in triathlon are:

- Kicked during a swim
- Fall or crash while on bike
- Fall while running

TRI NL

Signs and symptoms of a concussion

Physical: Headache, pressure in the head, dizziness, nausea/vomiting, blurred vision, sensitivity to light/sound, ringing in the ears, balance problems, feeling tired/low energy, drowsiness.

Cognitive: not thinking clearly, feeling slowed down, feeling like "in a fog", problems concentrating, memory problems.

Emotional: easily upset or angered, sadness, nervous/anxious, feeling more emotional.

Sleep-related: sleeping more or less than usual, having a hard time falling asleep.

TRI NL

What to do if suspected concussion

- In all suspected concussion cases, the athlete should stop activity right away.
- Continuing increases risk of more severe or longer lasting concussion symptoms and increase in risk of other injuries.
- Anyone with a suspected concussion should check with a medical professional.

Concussion treatment

General recommendations for concussion recovery include a short period of rest (24 to 48 hours). This may vary dependent on severity of concussion. The symptoms of a concussion usually last up to four weeks, but may last longer. In some cases, it can take weeks or months to heal. If a person has had a concussion before, it may take them longer to heal the next time.

Concussion prevention

Concussion prevention in triathlon includes:

- Respecting and following the rules of the sport, especially rules that are in place to reduce hits to the head (wearing helmet when necessary)
- Wearing properly fitted equipment – the right footwear to prevent falls
- Training in ways that are appropriate for your skill level

Return-to-sport protocol

- Follows a stepwise approach: rest, light activity, sport-specific exercises, non-contact training, full-contact practice, and return to competition.
- Each stage requires symptom-free progression and medical clearance.
- This protocol emphasizes individualized care based on the athlete's recovery.

TRI NL

Helpful links

Parachute - https://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/concussion/

https://parachute.ca/en/professional-resource/concussion-collection/canadian-guideline-on-concussion-in-sport/

Triathlon Canada - https://www.triathloncanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2022_Concussion-Policy_EN.pdf

Government of Canada - https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/concussion-sign-symptoms.html

TRI NL