

CONCUSSION

You have been given this information sheet because the Ringside Doctor has diagnosed you or your fighter as having concussion or being at a high risk of developing concussion. Symptoms of concussion can, at times, take several hours to become obvious.

**CONCUSSION IS A CHANGE IN BRAIN FUNCTION THAT IS BROUGHT ABOUT BY A FORCE TO THE HEAD OR ANYWHERE ON THE BODY THAT CAUSES THE BRAIN TO MOVE RAPIDLY BACK AND FORTH IN THE SKULL.
YOU DO NOT NEED TO LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS (GET KO'D) TO HAVE CONCUSSION.**

It is very important to take this advice seriously. It is now known that concussion can lead to long-term health problems, and repeated concussion increases this risk.

The table below describes the common symptoms of concussion. It is not possible to list every possible symptom of concussion as it varies from person to person, and from one concussion to the next.

If you begin to experience any of these symptoms following your fight or are concerned that you may be concussed, it is recommended that you immediately seek medical advice.

PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL	SLEEP
Headache	Poor concentration	More emotional	Drowsy
Loss of consciousness	Foggy thinking	Irritable	Trouble falling asleep
Nausea	Amnesia (loss of memory)	Upset	Sleeping more or less than normal
Vomiting	"Losing" time	Angry	
Flashing lights	Feeling slowed down	Anxious	
Dizziness		Sad	
Balance Issues		Change in behaviour	
Visual problems		Change in personality	
Photophobia (light bothering)	<p>Concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) and it maytake between 3-15 days for your brain to recover.</p> <p>During this time, you may experience any, or all, of the abovesymptoms.</p> <p>Most people recover fully from concussion with no long-termeffect.</p>		
Sonophobia (sound bothering)			
Numbness			
Problems with co-ordination			

If, however, you seem to have on-going symptoms of concussion, it is important to see a doctor as it can take some athletes weeks or months to fully recover.

Ignoring your symptoms may make your symptoms worse.

If your symptoms are worsening, or you are recovering more slowly than expected, or your family members or friends are concerned about you – do not delay – see your local doctor or healthcare provided straight away

WHAT TO DO NOW YOU HAVE CONCUSSION

- **Early care and monitoring** are important to prevent long-term complications from concussion. It is also the best thing to do to ensure you can return to the ring safely and in a timely manner.
- Have a **friend or family member stay with you** for a few days. You should not be alone until you know how the concussion has affected you.
- Get **plenty of rest and sleep** as this helps the brain to heal. Do not try to do too much too soon. As you start to feel better, you can gradually return to your usual routine.
- **DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL.**
- **DO NOT DRIVE A CAR/RIDE A MOTORCYCLE.**
- **DO NOT TAKE ANY MEDICATION UNLESS ADVISED BY THE DOCTOR.**
- Follow the **Return to Fight Strategy** attached to this leaflet. In particular:
 - **Avoid activities that are physically demanding** (e.g. non-contact training, heavy physical work) or require a lot of thinking or concentration (e.g. screen time).
 - **DO NOT SPAR until you are cleared to return by a medical practitioner fully appraised of your concussion episode.**
 - Do not return to activities such as football or basketball until you are fully recovered. If you do you are at a high risk of further concussion which can lead to long-term complications.

**A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has fully healed can be dangerous.
It may also slow your recovery and increase the chance of long-term problems.**

If you do not feel better after seven days, or back to your normal self, see a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries.

WHEN TO ATTEND HOSPITAL

Sometimes serious problems can develop hours after you sustain a concussion. If you experience any of the following symptoms, you **MUST** attend a hospital emergency department **IMMEDIATELY**.

Repeated vomiting
Headache that gets worse and does not go away
Loss of consciousness
Inability to stay awake during times you would normally be awake
Getting more confused, restless or agitated
Convulsions or seizures
Difficulty walking, or difficulty with balance
Weakness or numbness of any part of the body
Blurring or difficulty with vision
Slurred speech

If you experience any of the above symptoms, you MUST
attend a hospital emergency department IMMEDIATELY

To receive this form in an accessible format [email the Combat Sports Unit combat.sports@sport.vic.gov.au](mailto:combat.sports@sport.vic.gov.au)

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne. © State of Victoria,
Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions July 2022. Available at [Boxing and combat sports](#)
<<http://www.sport.vic.gov.au/our-work/boxing-and-combat-sports>>

RETURN TO FIGHT STRATEGY

Stage	Activity	
Initial period: 24/48 hours after contest		
An initial period of 24/48 hours of both relative physical and cognitive rest is recommended before beginning Stage 1 of this graduated strategy. There should be at least 48 hours (or longer) for each step of the progression. If any symptoms worsen during exercise, contestants should go back to the previous step.		
Stage 1: Return to limited activity		
1	Return to symptom limited activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms
Stage 2: Return to general fitness – <i>may only advance to this stage once concussion symptoms have resolved. It is recommended that Stage 2 not be commenced for at least one week.</i>		
2.1	Light aerobic activity	Walking, elliptical, stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training
2.2	Moderate aerobic activity	Jogging, swimming, skipping, other aerobic activities. No head impact activities
2.3	Sport-specific activity	Sprinting, mitts, bag/footwork, walk-through grappling. No partner work. May start progressive resistance training.
Stage 3: Return to non-contact fighting activities		
3.1	Bag/mitt work with movement	Tests fighter ability to punch and/or kick in multiple planes.
3.2	Shadow boxing/drills	Re-introduces fighter to sport environment and re-establishes footwork.
3.3	One-sided sparring & grappling.	Fighter begins to spar without the concern of contact. Reacts to opponents movements and begins to get timing back for punches, kicks and body position
Stage 4: Return to non-contact fighting activities – <i>may only advance to this stage when medical clearance has been obtained from concussion/brain injury specialist approved by the Board</i>		
4.1	Sparring – short duration	First step of live sparring. Rounds of short duration with long breaks. Number of rounds is small to begin with but can be increased as tolerated.
4.2	Sparring – longer duration	Rounds at this stage can begin to lengthen in duration while breaks between can shorten. Number of rounds can increase as fatigue allows.
4.3	Full contact practice	Full return to normal training. Return to normal rounds and time limits based on sport and next potential bout. Contestant should be able to tolerate normal parameters of training/sparring and it training without a return of symptoms.
4.4	Return to fight/contest	

OFFICIAL

Adapted from Nalepa B, Alexander A, Pardini J, et al. Fighting to keep a sport safe: Toward a structured and sport-specific return to play protocol. *The Physician and Sports Medicine*. February 2017

Ref: CSID0033
Scheduled for review 1 July 2023

OFFICIAL