

# ALCS

Guidelines for  
Interscholastic  
Athletics/  
Extracurricular  
Participation



ALLEGANY-LIMESTONE CENTRAL SCHOOL  
GUIDELINES FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC/  
EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION



**I. Introduction**

The Interscholastic Athletic/Extracurricular program at the Allegany-Limestone Central School is designed to meet the needs of students who want to express their abilities through participation in the school's programs. Students are encouraged to participate in these activities as a part of their scholastic experience. Interscholastic Athletic programs include all of the recognized fall, winter and spring sports programs at the modified, junior varsity and varsity level.

Extracurricular programs include all of the recognized club programs offered through the school. (Some of these are LEO, SADD, Math Counts, Natural Helpers, NHS, OM, Ski Club, School Plays and Musicals, etc.)

Participation in Interscholastic Athletic/Extracurricular activities at Allegany-Limestone Central School is a privilege, and with this privilege each student assumes responsibilities for conduct, academics, and attendance.

**II. Notice**

Student participation will not be allowed until a parental consent form has been filed with the Coach or Activity Advisor.

The agreement will remain in effect for the school year, from the time the consent form is signed.

Warning— Participation in activities does involve some risk. Physical injury can occur in any type of activity. When participating in a school-sponsored activity, a student and his parents/guardians acknowledge the potential risk for physical injury.

Allegany-Limestone Central High School is currently implementing an innovative program for our student-athletes. This program will assist our team physicians/athletic trainers in evaluating and treating head injuries (e.g., concussion). In order to better manage concussions sustained by our student-athletes, we have acquired a software tool called ImpACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). ImpACT is a computerized exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during competition, ImpACT is used to help determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed.

The computerized exam is given to athletes before beginning contact sport practice or competition. This non-invasive test is set up in "video-game" type format and takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. It is simple, and actually many athletes enjoy the challenge of taking the test. Essentially, the ImpACT test is a preseason physical of the brain. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, speed, and concentration. It, however, is not an IQ test.

If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will be required to re-take the test. Both the preseason and post-injury test data is given to a local doctor or, to help evaluate the injury. The information gathered can also be shared with your family doctor. The test data will enable these health professionals to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe for the injured athlete. If an injury of this nature occurs to your child, you will be promptly contacted with all the details.

I wish to stress that the ImpACT testing procedures are non-invasive, and they pose no risks to your student-athlete. We are excited to implement this program given that it provides us the best available information for managing concussions and preventing potential brain damage that can occur with multiple concussions. The ALCS administration, coaching, and athletic training staffs are striving to keep your child's health and safety at the forefront of the student athletic experience. If you have any further questions regarding this program please feel free to contact me at 716-375-6600 x2170.

Sincerely, Jon Luce, ALCS Athletic Director

### **What to do in an Emergency**

Although rare, there are some situations where you will need to call 911 and activate the Emergency Medical System (EMS). The following circumstances are medical emergencies:

1. Any time an athlete has a loss of consciousness of any duration. While loss of consciousness is not required for a concussion to occur, it may indicate more serious brain injury.
2. If an athlete exhibits any of the following: decreasing level of consciousness, looks very drowsy or cannot be awakened, if there is difficulty getting his or her attention, irregularity in breathing, severe or worsening headaches, persistent vomiting, or any seizures.

### **Suggested Concussion Management**

1. No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.

### **References**

Guskiewicz KM, et al. National Athletic Trainers' Association position statement: management of sport-related concussion. *Journal of Athletic Training* 2004; 39:280-297.

McCrory P, et al. Consensus statement on concussion in sport: the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Zurich, November 2008. *Journal of Athletic Training* 2009; 44:434-48.

### **Additional Resources**

Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports  
[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/high\\_school.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/high_school.html)

Concussion in Sports- What you need to know.  
<http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000>

NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook, 4th Ed, 2011.

**Revised January 2011**

The Allegany-Limestone Central School District does provide supplemental insurance coverage only, and according to the schedule carries a non-duplication provision.

- The parent/guardian is to first file a claim under Family and/or Employer policy.
- For any charges in excess of all final payments under other policies, attach a copy of all benefits paid under any rejection of benefits.
- The parent is responsible for submitting the "claim form" complete with charges, doctor signatures, and date of discharge to the insurance company at the earliest possible date.

Students must report all injuries, regardless of severity, to one of their coaches/advisors. Both parties will report the injury in writing to the school nurse. Inquiries must be reported to the school insurance company within thirty (30) days.

A student whose injury requires a physician's care, or has extended illness, must submit a physician's release to the school nurse before returning to an athletic team.

### **III. For the Athlete**

Each athlete will participate under the eligibility requirements, rules, and regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education, the New York State Public High School Association, and the Board of Education. Each athlete will also observe all training rules written and established by the coach. An athlete may not leave a sport to join another, except under conditions approved by the Athletic Director and coaches involved.

Health Examination—A student who wishes to participate in interscholastic sports must receive a health examination from the school physician and a health history update when necessary, prior to their first practice.

Note: Medical examinations will be scheduled periodically during the school year and will be valid for a period of twelve consecutive months. Any pupil whose participation is in question as a result of health history, or prolonged absence must be re-evaluated by the school physician prior to resuming participation.

#### **IV. For All Students**

##### **Attendance**

Students must be in school, at the start of the first period, on the day of and the day following an event. A student must also not be absent for more than 4 periods during the day of an event. Any student not following the attendance policy listed above without a legal excuse, may not participate in the next scheduled activity or event.

##### **Transportation Involving Away Athletic Events**

Athletes will ride to and from all athletic contests by transportation provided by the school district. An athlete may ride home with his/her parent/guardian upon receiving mutual consent between the parent/guardian and coach.

##### **Dress & Conduct**

Students are expected to act as ladies and gentlemen and to dress appropriately when representing the school. The student should always be cognizant that they not only represent themselves, but their family, coach, team, school and community. Students should avoid attending parties or other social gatherings where alcohol and/or drugs are being used.

A student will not manufacture, distribute, possess, procure or use illegal drugs or controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco products, or e-cigarettes.

Possession, means to have physical possession or otherwise to exercise dominance or control over tangible property in accordance with New York State Penal Law, Section 10-#8.

In addition, any violation of the district code of conduct will be considered to be a violation of the student athletic contract. Students may be placed on extra-curricular suspension at the discretion of the Principal for one or more of the following reasons:

- a. Any violation of the district code of conduct
- b. Inappropriate conduct or abuse of existing rules and regulations at an extra-curricular activity
- c. Failure to pay fines associated with damage, destruction, or loss of school property within thirty (30) days of notification

Whenever a student is to be suspended he/she will be informed of the reason and conditions of the suspension.

computers, phone, video games, etc., may be allowed.

##### **Return to Play**

After suffering a concussion, **no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day**. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Newer studies have shown us that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

**An athlete should never be allowed to resume physical activity following a concussion until he or she is symptom free and given the approval to resume physical activity by an appropriate health-care professional.**

Once an athlete no longer has signs, symptoms, or behaviors of a concussion **and is cleared to return to activity by a health-care professional**, he or she should proceed in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exercise. In most cases, the athlete will progress one step each day. The return to activity program schedule **may** proceed as below **following medical clearance**:

##### ***Progressive Physical Activity Program***

- Step 1:* Light aerobic exercise- 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike or light jog; no weight lifting, resistance training, or any other exercises.
- Step 2:* Moderate aerobic exercise- 15 to 20 minutes of running at moderate intensity in the gym or on the field without a helmet or other equipment.
- Step 3:* Non-contact training drills in full uniform. May begin weight lifting, resistance training, and other exercises.
- Step 4:* Full contact practice or training.
- Step 5:* Full game play.

**If symptoms of a concussion re-occur, or if concussion signs and/or behaviors are observed at any time during the return to activity program, the athlete must discontinue all activity and be re-evaluated by their health care provider.**

##### **Concussion in the Classroom**

Following a concussion, many athletes will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short- and long-term memory, concentration, and organization. In many cases, it is best to lessen the student's class load early on after the injury. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened schedule for a few days, or longer, if necessary. Decreasing the stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time.

When you suspect that a player has a concussion, follow the “Heads Up” 4-step Action Plan.

1. Remove the athlete from play.
2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.
3. Inform the athlete’s parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them information on concussion.
4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health-care professional says he or she is symptom-free and gives the okay to return to activity.

The signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion are not always apparent immediately after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and may develop over a few hours. An athlete should be observed following a suspected concussion and should never be left alone.

Athletes must know that they should never try to “tough out” a suspected concussion. Teammates, parents and coaches should never encourage an athlete to “play through” the symptoms of a concussion. In addition, there should never be an attribution of bravery to athletes who do play despite having concussion signs or symptoms. The risks of such behavior must be emphasized to all members of the team, as well as coaches and parents.

If an athlete returns to activity before being fully healed from an initial concussion, the athlete is at risk for a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has a chance to recover from the first can slow recovery or increase the chance for long-term problems. In rare cases, a repeat concussion can result in severe swelling and bleeding in the brain that can be fatal.

### **Cognitive Rest**

A concussion can interfere with school, work, sleep and social interactions. Many athletes who have a concussion will have difficulty in school with short- and long-term memory, concentration and organization. These problems typically last no longer than a week or two, but for some these difficulties may last for months. It is best to lessen the student’s class load early on after the injury. Most students with concussion recover fully. However, returning to sports and other regular activities too quickly can prolong the recovery.

The first step in recovering from a concussion is rest. Rest is essential to help the brain heal. Students with a concussion need rest from physical and mental activities that require concentration and attention as these activities may worsen symptoms and delay recovery. Exposure to loud noises, bright lights, computers, video games, television and phones (including texting) all may worsen the symptoms of concussion. As the symptoms lessen, increased use of

## **V. Reporting of Violations**

A.) Reports of alleged violations of Article IV coming from the individuals listed in numbers 1-4 below, having personally witnessed the alleged violation, must be investigated. The witness must submit to the Principal a signed report outlining the alleged violations within three (3) business days of the incident in question.

- 1.) Any district employee
- 2.) Any adult acting as a chaperone or assisting with a school activity at the request of a district employee
- 3.) Any law enforcement officer or agency
- 4.) A parent/legal guardian of the student involved.

B.) Reports of alleged violations from a person (s) other than those mentioned in (A) above must be made by the person witnessing the incident. Those reports must be documented and considered by the Principal. If the Principal determines that the alleged violation is valid, the witness must submit a signed report to the Principal within three (3) business days.

C.) If the district obtains knowledge of the conviction of a student in a court of law for an offense covered under Article IV, the investigation procedure will apply with this conviction constituting a violation of those eligibility rules.

## **VI. Procedures**

Upon report of an alleged violation of Article IV, the Principal or Athletic Director shall immediately provide verbal notice, followed by written notice, to the student and his/her parent/guardian that an investigation of the alleged violation is taking place. The reasons for the investigation and the possibility of suspension or removal from extracurricular activities will be included in the notice. The activity advisor and/or coach shall also be informed immediately.

The student and the student's parent/guardian will be offered a conference with the Principal and other staff, as appropriate, within two (2) school days following the initial notification of the alleged violation. Those attending the meeting will be given the opportunity to question the information upon which the alleged violation is based, and to submit additional information or explanations.

The Principal will make a final decision in the matter, within three (3) business days a verbal and written notice will be given promptly to both student and parent/guardian and the coach or activity advisor.

## **VII. Responses to Violations of Article IV**

### **A.) First Violation**

Upon determination of a first violation of Article IV the student shall be removed from participation in any and all extracurricular/interscholastic activities for the period of eight (8) school weeks. This period may be shortened by up to four (4) weeks if the student provides approved documentation of one (1) professional counseling session (at student's expense) each week, for a maximum of four (4) weeks. Professional counseling refers to counseling completed with a licenses/certified counselor including a licensed certified drug/alcohol counselor for drug and alcohol related infractions. The student/athlete is required to attend practices and games, non-dress and non-active. This is to maintain team cohesiveness and to keep the student/athlete up-to-date on new changes and team activities.

### **B.) Second Violation**

Upon determination of any subsequent violation of Article IV during the school year, the student shall be removed from participation in all extracurricular/interscholastic activities for the remainder of the school year, or twenty (20) school weeks, whichever is longer.

In the event that the school year ends before the full eight (8) week removal (first violation), or the full twenty (20) week removal (second violation) is completed, the remaining removal weeks carry over to the next school year and the individual removed from participation remains ineligible until the removal period is completed.

## **Recognition and Management**

If an athlete exhibits any signs, symptoms, or behaviors that make you suspicious that he or she may have had a concussion, that athlete must be removed from all physical activity, including sports and recreation. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk for further injury, and even death.

### **SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE**

Headache

Nausea

Balance problems or dizziness

Double or fuzzy vision

Sensitivity to light or noise

Feeling sluggish

Feeling foggy or groggy

Concentration or memory problems

Confusion

Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to "diagnose" a concussion. That is the role of an appropriate health-care professional. However, you must be aware of the signs, symptoms and behaviors of a possible concussion, and if you suspect that an athlete may have a concussion, then he or she must be immediately removed from all physical activity

### **SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS OR COACHES**

Appears dazed or stunned

Is confused about what to do

Forgets plays

Is unsure of game, score, or opponent

Moves clumsily

Answers questions slowly

Loses consciousness

Shows behavior or personality changes

Can't recall events prior to hit

Can't recall events after hit

# SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION IN SPORTS

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

## Introduction

A concussion is type of traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal function of the brain. It occurs when the brain is rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. What may appear to be only a mild jolt or blow to the head or body can result in a concussion.

The understanding of sports-related concussion has evolved dramatically in recent years. We now know that young athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of a concussion. Once considered little more than a “ding” on the head, it is now understood that a concussion has the potential to result in short or long-term changes in brain function, or in some cases, death.

## What is a concussion?

You’ve probably heard the terms “ding” and “bell-ringer.” These terms were once used to refer to minor head injuries and thought to be a normal part of sports. There is no such thing as a minor brain injury. Any suspected concussion must be taken seriously. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. Basically, any force that is transmitted to the head causes the brain to literally bounce around or twist within the skull, potentially resulting in a concussion.

**It used to be believed that a player had to lose consciousness or be “knocked-out” to have a concussion. This is not true, as the vast majority of concussions do not involve a loss of consciousness. In fact, less than 10% of players actually lose consciousness with a concussion.**

What exactly happens to the brain during a concussion is not entirely understood. It appears to be a very complex injury affecting both the structure and function of the brain. The sudden movement of the brain causes stretching and tearing of brain cells, damaging the cells and creating chemical changes in the brain. Once this injury occurs, the brain is vulnerable to further injury and very sensitive to any increased stress until it fully recovers.

Common sports injuries such as torn ligaments and broken bones are structural injuries that can be seen on MRIs or x-rays, or detected during an examination. A concussion, however, is primarily an injury that interferes with how the brain works. While there is damage to brain cells, the damage is at a microscopic level and cannot be seen on MRI or CT scans. Therefore, the brain looks normal on these tests, even though it has been seriously injured.

## VIII. Appeals

The in-district appeal process #1-3 below will be scheduled for completion within ten (10) school days.

- 1). The student and/or parent/guardian have the right to appeal any determination made by the Principal to an Appeals Committee. Any individual choosing to begin the appeal process will contact the Athletic Director who will convene an Appeal Committee. All parties are entitled to be present and address the committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be rendered within two (2) business days and notice given to all parties.
- 2). The student and/or parents have the further right to appeal any determination made by the Appeal Committee to the Superintendent who shall make a determination within three (3) business days.
- 3). Additionally, the Board of Education has the power to review the decisions of the Superintendent. Any party involved may contact the President of the Board of Education to arrange for such an appeal. The Board of Education shall meet and render a decision within five (5) business days.
- 4.) Finally, outside of the school district procedures, an appeal may be made to the Commissioner of Education in Albany and/or the court system. Advice regarding these levels of appeal should be sought from a qualified individual.