Augustana University Concussion Management Plan

The purpose of the Concussion Management Plan is to improve the prevention, recognition, evaluation and management of concussions in student-athletes, and to fulfill the NCAA requirement that each NCAA institution has a protocol for the management of concussions.

Concussion Defined
A concussion is defined as a complex pathophysiological processes affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces.

Signs and Symptoms of Acute Concussion
Signs and symptoms of a concussion include, but are not limited to headache, “pressure in the head”, neck pain, nausea, dizziness, blurred vision, balance disturbance, sensitivity to light, sensitivity to noise, feeling “slowed down”, feeling “in a fog”, difficulty concentrating, difficulty remembering (amnesia), fatigue or low energy, mental confusion, drowsiness, trouble falling asleep, more emotional, irritability, sadness and being nervous and/or anxious.

Responsibility of Reporting Medical Conditions
Each athlete participating in intercollegiate athletics at Augustana University must sign a statement indicating that in the occurrence of an injury, illness or concussion that they report such issue to their coach, certified athletic trainer(s) and/or team physicians.

Concussion Education
Education materials on concussions are posted in the Athletic Training Room of the Elmen Center, and can be found on the NCAA web site at www.ncaa.org/health-safety. The certified athletic training staff and the team physicians of the University can also provide additional information on concussions.

Pre-injury Baseline ImPACT Testing
Student athletes participating in the following contact and collision sports will be given a baseline ImPACT test: Baseball, Men’s Basketball, Women’s Basketball, Football, Women’s Soccer, Softball, Spirit Squad, Volleyball, Wrestling and pole-vaulting in Track and Field. The ImPACT test is a computerized program that evaluates and documents multiple aspects of neurocognitive functioning, including verbal and visual memory, attention span, brain processing speed, reaction time and post-concussive symptoms.

On-Field / Sideline Assessment
When an athlete shows any signs or symptoms of a concussion, they will immediately be removed from the practice or competition and will be examined by a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) and/or team physician. The attending ATC will utilize a Sport Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT3) to assess the athlete’s cognitive and physical symptoms. A student athlete who demonstrates symptoms of a concussion will not be allowed to participate in athletic activities.

Post-Injury ImPACT Testing
When applicable, student athletes who have sustained a concussion will be given a post-injury ImPACT test. Results will be reviewed by the team physician and shared with the ATC and student athlete. The post-injury ImPACT test will be used to monitor the student-athletes progress and to assist the physician with return to play decisions.
Follow-up Assessment
Clinical follow-up assessments will be performed by the Certified Athletic Training staff.

Return to Play Criteria
1. Athletes diagnosed with a concussion must have cognitive and physical rest until symptom free.
2. Athletes who need Academic Accommodations will be given a form from the team physician and the Accessibility and Academic Support Services department will also be notified.
3. Athletes must be asymptomatic at rest, re-take the ImPACT test and be asymptomatic with the following exertion progression tests before they will be allowed to return to physical activity.
4. Each step of the following exertion tests must be successfully completed without any return of concussive symptoms. Generally, only one step will be performed within a 24-hour period unless directed by the team physician.
   - Light aerobic activity (walking, swimming, stationary bike – no resistance training)
   - Sport specific exercise (individual drills within a non-contact environment)
   - Non-contact practice (advanced position drills and resistance training in weight room)
   - Full contact practice
   - Full return to sport without limitations
5. The team physician will determine an athlete’s return to play status.

Home Care Instructions
After an athlete has sustained a concussion, they will be given basic home care instructions which explain the common symptoms of a concussion, and given direction on what they should and should not be doing at home to manage the concussion and explained the need to seek care urgently should their symptoms worsen. The parent, coach, roommate or other individual that will be monitoring the concussed student-athlete will be given these same home care instructions as well.

Notification of Student Services / Academic Accommodations
When a student-athlete has been diagnosed with a concussion, the Accessibility and Academic Support Services department will be contacted by the Certified Athletic Training staff and/or team physician. An ImPACT Academic Accommodations form will be completed by the team physician and given to the director of the Accessibility and Academic Support Services department. They will in turn contact the student athlete’s class instructors / professors to notify them of the physician academic accommodation recommendations.