Riverdale Country School Post Concussion Home Care Instructions

I believe that ________________________ sustained a concussion on _______________. To make sure she/he recovers, please read the following information as it will help to answer some of your questions & provide directions for follow-up care. If you have any questions, please contact:

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Head Athletic Trainer

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What is a concussion?
• A concussion is a disturbance in brain function that occurs following either a blow to the head or as a result of the violent shaking of the head.

Please seek immediate medical attention if your son/daughter exhibits any of the following:
• Develops a worse headache
• Becomes dizzy, drowsy or cannot be aroused
• Mental confusion
• Slurred speech
• Repeated vomiting
• Pupils unequal size
• Ringing in the ears
• Seizures
• Clear fluid coming from nose and/or ears
• Change in the state of consciousness
• Anything you find unusual

It is OK to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is OK to:</th>
<th>There is NO need to:</th>
<th>Do NOT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is okay to give Tylenol every 4-6 hours for headaches</td>
<td>Check eyes with flashlight</td>
<td>Drink alcohol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use an ice pack on head and neck as needed for comfort</td>
<td>Wake up every hour</td>
<td>Take ibuprofen, aspirin, or naproxen unless prescribed by physician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eat a light diet</td>
<td>Test reflexes</td>
<td>Drive a vehicle</td>
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<td>Go to sleep</td>
<td>Stay in bed</td>
<td>Exercise or lift weights</td>
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<td>Rest (no strenuous activity or sports)</td>
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<td>Eat spicy foods</td>
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Cognitive rest:
An additional cornerstone of concussion management is cognitive rest.
1. Acute Phase- Immediately after (Goal: get as much rest as possible)
   a. No text messaging
   b. No video games
   c. No computer use
   d. No school or homework
   e. No reading
2. Recovery Phase-when symptoms start to subside
   a. No physical activity
   b. Academic accommodations

However, “Cocoon therapy,” or keeping the concussed athletes in a quiet, dark room, is NOT recommended, as isolation can affect emotional well-being.

Emotional Support
A student with a concussion has a temporarily malfunctioning brain, and therefore may not “act like themselves.” Of particular concern are changes in emotion and impulse control, including engaging in risky behavior. New recommendations advise that parents provide a calm, supportive environment and monitor their children’s emotional state. This abnormal emotional state is temporary.

In the following days:
• She/he is NOT allowed to participate in sports/physical education classes until she/he has been cleared by a neurologist and/or Lori. Criteria for returning to play will include: no symptoms at rest, no symptoms with exertion & post-concussion ImPACT results must be at or near baseline scores.

ImPACT Testing:
At Riverdale, we use the ImPACT Concussion Management system which is a computer based testing program that takes about 20 minutes and measures attention, verbal and visual memory, processing speed and reaction time. A baseline test is taken, prior to the season, to measure a baseline score of these items. In the event an athlete receives a concussion, a follow up test will be performed to compare the baseline results to the athlete’s current state. This is yet another tool we can use in assessing an athlete’s readiness to return to play. Please know that the ImPACT system does NOT diagnose concussions. Riverdale will use this program in conjunction with the athlete’s history, physical exams, other physician ordered special testing (CT scans, etc.) and physician guidance in returning athletes to play.

Second Impact Syndrome:
Second Impact Syndrome is a dangerous condition which can occur if an athlete returns to sports before full recovery. If you receive a second blow to your head (even a relatively minor one) before the symptoms of the initial concussion have cleared, there can be more serious complications.