

Presentation of Mary Academy Concussion Policy Updated June 2016

Presentation of Mary Academy is committed to the safety of all our student athletes. The purpose of this policy is to educate our coaches, parents, school personnel, volunteers and student athletes on the seriousness of brain injuries and concussions. A team of school staff consisting of our school nurse, athletic director and school administrator has developed these policies for Presentation of Mary Academy and they have been adopted by the Presentation of Mary Academy.

We have been informed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) that while these policies are not subject to MDPH review, they must be in accordance with MDPH regulations. Presentation of Mary Academy will be submitting affirmations on our school letterhead to MDPH documenting that we have complied with the regulatory requirement to develop appropriate head injury policies. We will then update and submit this affirmation by September 30, 2016 and every two years thereafter.

Person Responsible

Presentation of Mary Academy has designated its Athletic Director to oversee the implementation of policies and protocols governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries. In addition, the AD will be responsible for:

- (1) Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, required training and reporting.
- (2) Assuring that all documentation is in place.
- (3) Reviewing, updating, and implementing policy every two years and including updates in annual training and student and parent handbooks.

Training Requirement

It is extremely important to educate our coaches, school personnel, athletes, and the community about concussions. On a yearly basis, all coaches, nurses and the Athletic Director, must complete the online course "Concussion In Sports: What You Need to Know."

This course is offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). A certificate of completion must be submitted to the Athletic Director annually.

Our student athletes also need to know the importance of reporting a concussion to their coaches, parents, nurse and other school personnel. Every year, student athletes and their parents will participate in an educational training on concussions at the beginning of the school year or each sport season. This will be mandatory for the student and parent if the child wishes to participate in athletics at PMA.

Physical Examination

Every student at Presentation of Mary Academy must be separately and carefully examined by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant, prior to a student's participation in competitive athletics, on an annual basis. The completed and signed copy of the medical clearance form should be mailed, faxed or hand-delivered to the school nurse. No student athlete will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until all forms, including annual physical examinations, are signed and submitted.

Frequency of Exam:

As a matter of state and school policy, Presentation of Mary Academy accepts physical examinations completed within 13 months to allow for insurance coverage that would be not be possible if examinations are within a 12 month period. This medical examination should be completed by a physician, nurse practitioner, etc. and should authorize the student athlete who participates in multiple sports seasons during the following 13 months that the student is medically cleared to do so.

Where Forms Are Kept:

The current annual medical examination form should be submitted to the school nurse. It should also be kept in the student's medical record. The school nurse and/or athletic director should ensure that all student athletes who are participating in interscholastic school sports have been medically cleared annually.

A student athlete at Presentation of Mary Academy cannot participate in an interscholastic sports activity if she/he has not had a physical examination within the last 13 months.

Concussion History Form Submission and Review Policy

The Massachusetts concussion law requires athletes and their parents to inform coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of each sports season. This reporting is done via the **Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form** and should be completed by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the student. It must be submitted to Presentation of Mary Academy's Nurse, **prior to the start of each sport season a student plans to participate in an interscholastic athletic activity**. This form provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history. This form is designed to ensure that particular attention is paid to identifying athletes with a history of brain or spinal injuries. For example, it asks such questions as:

- Has student ever experienced a traumatic head injury (a blow to the head)? (If yes, when?)
- Has student ever received medical attention for a head injury? (If yes, when?)
- Was student diagnosed with a concussion? (If yes, when?)
- Durations of symptoms for most recent concussion.

Until the pre-participation form is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and student and returned to the school prior to the start of the school year or each sport season, the student cannot participate in the interscholastic sports activity.

History of Multiple Concussions on Pre-participation Form:

The decision to allow a player who reported a history of multiple concussions on her/his pre-participation form should be made only after consultation with the student's physician or primary care provider; the sports medicine or concussion specialist, if involved, the neuropsychologist, if involved, and the appropriate school athletic staff and the parent. Current evidence indicates that youth who have suffered one or more concussions are more likely to suffer a subsequent one. Options may include switching positions, limiting contact in practices, or changing sports altogether to minimize the risk of re-injury. The focus of Presentation of Mary Academy will always be on protecting the health and safety of the student and avoiding long term consequences that can occur from repeated concussions.

Collection/Distribution of Pre-participation Forms:

Presentation of Mary Academy has the pre-participation forms available electronically on the school's website under the Athletic Department.

Hard copies of these forms are also available at the Main Office. The parent/student can mail or hand-deliver the completed and signed pre-participation form to the nurse.

Medical Review of Pre-Participation Form Policy

At the start of each sports season, the Athletic Director will review all pre-participation forms and forward to the school nurse those forms indicating a history of head injury. The school nurse will be responsible for:

- Reviewing or having the student's physician review completed pre-participation forms
- Addressing any questions raised by the Athletic Director
- Communicating with the coach regarding the student's concussion history and discussing concerns
- Following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student's participation in extracurricular athletic activities.

Medical/Nursing Review

Collaboration and sharing of this information is crucial to management and coordination of student's care after a head injury. Presentation of Mary Academy requires that the completed "**Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form**" should be submitted to the nurse, who is responsible for reviewing the form. The school nurse will forward this form to the physician if medically indicated. The school nurse should also maintain documentation of the Head Injury Assessments in the student's health record.

Blank Copies of the "**Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Forms**" are kept in the nurse's office and athletic director's office. Parents are made aware of their responsibility for completing the form in the event of a head injury occurring outside of interscholastic athletic activity through written materials at the start of the sports season. Such forms will be submitted to the athletic director, coach or school nurse.

As instructed on the "**Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form**" the coach will complete this form immediately (day of injury) after the game or practice for head injuries that result in the student being removed from play due to a suspected concussion and submit it to the school nurse or the athletic director.

Reporting Head Injury Policy

At Presentation of Mary Academy head injuries or suspected concussions (after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body) sustained during athletic activities must be reported by the coach as soon as possible to the school nurse or the athletic director.

Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of a concussion should not be allowed to return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

ANY ATHLETE WHO EXHIBITS SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, OR BEHAVIORS CONSISTENT WITH A CONCUSSION (SUCH AS LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS, HEADACHE, CONFUSION, OR BALANCE PROBLEMS) SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM THE CONTEST AND/OR PRACTICE AND SHALL NOT RETURN TO PLAY UNTIL CLEARED BY AN APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.

Any head injury can be a serious life threatening condition. It is important that the athlete and parent/guardian pay careful attention to these symptoms:

- headache
- pressure in head
- nausea or vomiting
- balance problems or dizziness
- double or blurry vision problem
- sensitivity to light or noise
- feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- confusion, concentration or memory

Identifying Head Injury or Suspected Head Injury and Removing from Play Policy

In the event that a student athlete receives a head injury, the nurse or coach will use the Standardized Assessment for Concussion (SAC) Form A (Standardized Assessment of Concussion) to assess and document the student athlete's concussion. The nurse or coach will also report on the student athlete's signs and symptoms of a concussion by using the Signs and Symptoms Check-List. After the initial evaluation of a concussion, all signs and symptoms will be tracked using the ImPACT Test Grading Scale.

Any athlete who is symptomatic but stable is allowed to go home with his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) following the head injury:

- If the head injury occurs at practice, a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will immediately be notified and must come and pick-up the student athlete and talk to the nurse or coach in person.
- If the injury occurs at a game or event he/she may go home with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) after talking with the nurse or coach.
- Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will receive important information regarding signs and symptoms of deteriorating brain injury/function prompting immediate referral to a local emergency room or private physician, as well as return to play requirements at the school.

- Parent(s) or legal guardian(s), as well as student athletes, must read and sign the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form and bring it back to the school nurse before starting with the return to play protocol. All symptomatic students will be referred to their primary care provider for evaluation.

When an athlete loses consciousness for any reason, the nurse will start the Emergency Action Plan by activating EMS, recognize ABC's, stabilize the C-spine and transport the injured athlete to the local hospital via ambulance. If the nurse is not present, the coach should call EMS immediately, check ABCs and not move athlete until help arrives.

Any athlete who is removed from the competition or event and begins to develop signs and symptoms of a worsening brain injury will be transported to the hospital immediately in accordance with the Emergency Action Plan. **Worsening signs and symptoms requiring immediate physician referral:**

- Amnesia lasting longer than 15 minutes
- Deterioration in neurological function
- Decreasing level of consciousness
- Decrease or irregularity in respirations
- Decrease or irregularity in pulse
- Increase in blood pressure
- Unequal, dilated, or un-reactive pupils
- Cranial nerve deficits
- Any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
- Mental-status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion, agitation
- Seizure activity
- Vomiting/worsening headache
- Motor deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
- Sensory deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
- Balance deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
- Cranial nerve deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
- Post-Concussion symptoms worsen
- Athlete is still symptomatic at the end of the game

Return to Play Policy When Using ImPACT testing

Following a diagnosed concussion made by a healthcare provider, the student athlete will take a post-injury Concussion Grading Scale test within 24 to 48 hours following the head injury. **STUDENT ATHLETES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO MOVE ONTO FUNCTIONAL/PHYSICAL TESTING UNTIL THEIR IMPACT TEST IS BACK TO THE BASELINE SCORE AND THEY ARE ASYMPTOMATIC.** After a student athlete takes their first post injury test, they will not be re-tested again for 5 days. If after the first post-injury ImPACT test the athlete is not back to his/her baseline, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be notified, and the student athlete will be referred back to their healthcare provider and must have the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form signed by a physician, licensed neuropsychologist, nurse practitioner or certified athletic trainer stating when the athlete is allowed to return play.

Following an injury, the nurse will take the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and fill in the date of all post-injury tests taken by each student athlete.

Graduated Reentry Plan

Presentation of Mary Academy requires that all students returning to school and athletics after a concussion have a written clearance for reentry. School staff, such as teachers, school nurse, counselors, administrators, coaches and others should work together to develop and implement this plan in coordination with the student, their parent/guardian and the primary care provider.

Graduated return to academic plans are based on the stages of recovery framework that takes a student from rest to gradual return to full participation in academic activities.

Stages of Recovery:

The stages of recovery are a framework designed through a collaborative effort by local health care professionals. The purpose of this framework is to create common language that will help guide students, families, school personnel and health professionals through the recuperation process. Placement in stages is based on assessment of the student's medical condition by a licensed medical professional and accompanied by written orders.

Red Stage (Usually 2 – 4 days, but could last weeks)

- Rest
- Students typically do not attend school

Orange Stage

- Rest
- Attend school half to full days
- Avoid heavy backpacks
- Work with designated educational personnel regarding school accommodations
- No tests in school
- No sports, band, chorus, physical education or outdoor recess

Yellow Stage

- Attend school full-time if possible
- Students and families work with teachers regarding homework deadlines (complete as much as possible)
- See school nurse for pain management and/or rest if needed
- Limit one quiz/test per day (untimed testing is recommended)
- Work in 15 minute blocks
- No sports
- Licensed medical professional will make decisions regarding band, chorus, physical education and outdoor recess (elementary level) based on medical assessment

Green Stage

- Attend school full-time
- Resume normal activities
- Resume sports once school work is back on track, student is symptom- free, and has been cleared by a licensed medical professional

Penalties Policy:

Presentation of Mary Academy takes the safety of student athletes seriously. All members of the school staff are expected to follow these policies and protocols to support the health and safety of student athletes. The underlying philosophy of these policies is “when in doubt, sit them out.” Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games. If students or parents have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Head of School and also place their complaint in writing with a request for resolution.

Presentation of Mary Academy, Department of Athletics: CONCUSSION AND RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

Physical Post Concussion Tests

The athlete will be given five physical post-concussion tests administered by the nurse. Only one test per day. Next test will be administered only when previous test is passed with no symptoms.

These tests will take a minimum of five days.

Test 1: (To increase heart rate) Low levels of physical activity. This includes walking, light jogging, light stationary biking and light weight lifting (low weight, moderate reps, no bench, no squats).

Test 2: (To increase heart rate with movement) Moderate levels of physical activity with body/head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate intensity on the stationary cycle, moderate intensity weight lifting (reduce time and or reduces weight for the athlete's typical routine).

Test 3: Heavy non-contact physical activity. This includes sprinting/running, high intensity stationary cycling, completing the regular weight lifting routine, non-contact sport specific drills (agility with 3 planes of movement).

Test 4: Sports specific practice.

Test 5: Full contact in a controlled drill or practice.

Athlete's Name _____ Age _____ Date of Injury _____
Sport _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

I have read the *Concussion and Return to Play Protocol* and I understand the seriousness of a concussion, its symptoms and the *Graduated Return to Play Protocol*. Questions? Call the school nurse at 978-682-9391 ext. 114 or athletic office at 978-682-9391 ext. 110.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Test Completion Dates with Asymptomatic Results:

Test 1 _____ Test 2 _____ Test 3 _____ Test 4 _____ Test 5 _____

I verify that _____ (athlete's name) has completed the five physical post concussion tests and said athlete was asymptomatic for all tests.

Nurse Signature _____ Date _____

Athlete Signature: _____

I have read and understand the *Concussion and Return to Play Protocol*, concussion symptoms, and the seriousness of a second concussion injury.

Athlete Signature _____ Date _____