

Emergency situations

Call 911 if the person is unconscious, has lost consciousness or had a seizure.

If they are conscious:

- visit an emergency room or a health care practitioner
- contact Telehealth Ontario at [1-866-797-0000](tel:1-866-797-0000) to get health advice or information

Symptoms may appear hours or days after an injury, especially in children and the elderly. If symptoms appear or persist, visit a physician or nurse practitioner.

This information is not for emergencies. For emergencies, please call 911 or go to your nearest hospital or emergency department. It is also not intended to provide medical advice. For advice on health care for concussion symptoms, please consult with a physician or nurse practitioner.

Recognize symptoms of a concussion

Everyone can help recognize a possible concussion if they know what to look for.

A person with a concussion might have any of the signs or symptoms listed below. They might show up right away or hours, or even days later. Just one sign or symptom is enough to suspect a concussion. Most people with a concussion **do not** lose consciousness.

Common signs and symptoms

Physical

- Headache
- Pressure in the head
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light or sound
- Ringing in the ears
- Balance problems
- Tired or low energy
- Drowsiness
- “Don’t feel right”

Sleep-related

- Sleeping more or less than usual
- Having a hard time falling asleep

Cognitive (Thinking)

- Not thinking clearly
- Slower thinking
- Feeling confused
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering

Emotional

- Irritability (easily upset or angered)
- Depression
- Sadness
- Nervous or anxious



Red Flags

“Red flags” may mean the person has a more serious injury. Treat red flags as an emergency and call 911.

Red flags include:

- Neck pain or tenderness
- Double vision
- Weakness or tingling in arms or legs
- Severe or increasing headache
- Seizure or convulsion
- Loss of consciousness (knocked out)
- Vomiting more than once
- Increasingly restless, agitated or aggressive
- Getting more and more confused

What to do if you suspect a concussion

Follow these three steps if you — or someone you know — experiences a blow to the head, face, neck or body and you suspect a concussion. Call 911 if you are concerned the injury is life-threatening, such as the person is unconscious or they had a seizure.

1. Recognize signs and symptoms of a concussion and remove yourself or the athlete from the sport/physical activity, even if you feel OK or they insist they are OK.
2. Get yourself or the athlete checked out by a physician or nurse practitioner.
3. Support gradual return to school and sport.

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