

Dear Parents and Students-Athletes,

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you about concussions/head injuries and how Morristown East High School will be managing them. There have been a number of new facts and laws involving concussions, and you need to be informed about them. Once you are done reading this, we need you to fill out and sign the back sheet acknowledging you received and read this letter. Athletes will not be allowed to participate without this letter signed and returned to their coach.

“A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. It occurs when the brain is rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as result of a blow to the head or body.” *(Sports Medicine Handbook, 4th edition)* It was once believed that only being “knocked out” meant there was a possibility of a concussion, but this is a myth.

To further understand, if you were to drop a heavy object on your foot, in all likelihood it would result in swelling, redness and pain. An x-ray may be negative, because there was no fracture or anatomic disruption, however, the bruise still exists resulting in pain, redness, swelling, etc... The pain and inflammation will persist, until enough time passes with limitation of activity and rest for the injury to heal, noted by the resolution of all signs and symptoms.

There are many signs and symptoms of a concussion. Here is a small list of them to look for if an athlete has suffered a concussion:

 Headaches Feeling “foggy” Change in behavior

 Vision problems Concentration problems Memory problems

 Nausea Sensitivity to light or noises Dizziness

More serious symptoms of a concussion that require immediate medical evaluation include, but not limited to:

 Loss of Consciousness Difficulty staying awake after injury occurred

 Unequal pupils Numbness/tingling in neck or extremities

 Vomiting Slurred speech

 Bleeding from nose or ears Can not recall events before or after injury

 Difficulty with balance/unable to walk

If a coach or medical personnel believe an athlete has a concussion, they will be pulled out of practice/games for further evaluation.

The best treatment for a concussion is rest, both physically and cognitively. That means no physical exertion and to avoid activities that increase symptoms such as TV, computers, cell phones and video games. In some cases, accommodations in school such as altered school work and extended deadlines may need to be granted on short term bases. After a concussion has been suffered, the athlete should be monitored for about 12 hours by someone. The athlete should be allowed to sleep once home, but should not be given ibuprofen or acetaminophen. Studies have shown, you no longer have to wake them up every couple of hours. But the athlete should be told that if any symptoms increase they need to let their parents or guardians know so they can be taken to the Emergency Room. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the Athletic Director or the Certified Athletic Trainer.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Utt, MA, ATC/LAT

Certified Athletic Trainer

Morristown East High School/Rehab Group of Morristown

(865) 740-8612 cell

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**Please return this section to your student-athletes Head Coach**

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, parents/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

have read the letter from Morristown East High School concerning concussions and head injuries. We have also read and talked with our son/daughter about concussion and understand that there is a risk of head injury while playing athletics.

Parents signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have read the letter from Morristown East High School concerning concussions and head injuries. I have also gone over the information in the letter with my parents/guardians and understand there is a risk of head injuries while playing athletics.

Student-Athlete signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_