



The Camp Newsletter

August 2021



CONCUSSIONS: AVOID, RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND

One of the reasons why a concussion is such a dangerous injury at camps is because it is often hard to identify. If a camper breaks their arm, you can recognize it immediately and take the proper medical steps. But concussion, also called a traumatic brain injury (TBI), can be hidden, and symptoms may occur many hours after the initial trauma. Church Mutual encourages camp leaders to teach staff how to avoid, recognize and respond to concussions.

AVOID

Basic safety precautions can make a big difference in preventing debilitating head injuries. Take these steps to make your camp safer:

1. Use non-skid mats in areas that might become wet and cause slips.
2. Maintain adequate lighting in your facility, both outdoors and indoors.
3. If campers will be biking, they all should wear helmets that fit properly and are undamaged.
4. Assign staff members to supervise all activities to watch for signs of concussion.
5. Inspect playgrounds and other play areas to ensure they have adequate surface fill and are in good condition.
6. If you are in a situation where there is a low-hanging obstacle, warn campers so they can avoid bumping their heads.

RECOGNIZE

Every staff member should know the basic symptoms of a concussion so they can take immediate action if a camper suffers from a TBI. Concussion symptoms include:

- Difficulty thinking clearly or concentrating.
- Headache, nausea, dizziness or sensitive to light.
- Sleepiness and excessive fatigue.
- Lack of coordination.
- Ringing in the ears.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), you should call 911 if a camper or staff member exhibits the following symptoms:

- A worsening headache or persistent vomiting.
- Extreme drowsiness or inability to wake up
- Losing consciousness.

RESPOND

When you suspect a camper or staff member has suffered a concussion, you should act right away to prevent further injury.

1. Remove the camper from activities and contact their parent or guardian as soon as possible.
2. Implement immediate rest. Ideally, the concussion patient will lie down in a quiet, dark room without any other stimuli.
3. Watch the person closely. What may seem like a minor concussion could turn into a major injury as time progresses.

Most people recover from concussions with no additional treatment. However, if a concussion lasts longer than 15 minutes and includes some of the other above symptoms, it's time to seek a doctor's attention.