

# West Northumberland Curling Club

## Concussion Policy

### Position Statement:

WNCC takes seriously the health of all curlers and is committed to ensuring the safety of participants and providing a safe curling environment.

WNCC is committed to implementing the requirements in Rowan's Law legislation.

### Objective:

This policy will provide:

- Policy for falls; 4.4
- Procedures in the event of a possible concussive injury
- Protocol for implementation for Rowan's Law legislation
- Policy for Concussion Prevention; 4.4.1
- WNCC Concussion Code of Conduct
- Concussion Awareness Resources

### 4.4 Policy for Falls:

In the event of a fall where a curler's head or helmet impacts the ice, a curling stone, or any hard surface **911 must be called.**

### Procedures:

In the event of a fall where a curler's head or helmet impacts the ice, a curling stone, or any hard surface the participant (if able), coach, or other curler shall:

- Initiate Emergency Action Plan and call 911. The injury should be considered to be serious.**
- Inform the parent/guardian if the person is under the age of 18 years
- The curler **must not resume play.**
- Stay with the injured participant until a parent/guardian and emergency personnel arrives.
- Monitor and document any physical, emotional and/or cognitive changes.
- complete a WNCC Incident Report and give to the WNCC Administrator for distribution to the board and filing.

**For someone who is Unconscious:** – Assume there is also a possible head and/or neck injury and, only if trained, immobilize the individual before ambulance transportation to hospital. Do not remove athletic equipment (e.g. helmet) unless there is difficulty breathing.

# West Northumberland Curling Club

## Rowan's Law Protocol

**As required by Rowan's Law all coaches, instructors of curlers under the age of 26 years and all curlers under the age of 26 years, and parents/guardians of curlers under the age of 18 years shall:**

- Review any one of Ontario's official Concussion Awareness Resources before curling at WNCC
- Confirm that you have reviewed this every year. A receipt of Review of Concussion Awareness Resources must be completed, and a copy held by WNCC
- Review the WNCC Concussion Code of Conduct.
- Confirm that you have reviewed this every year. A receipt of Review of Concussion Code of Conduct must be completed, and a copy held by WNCC

**As required by Rowan's Law, the Return-to-Sport Protocol requirements for curlers under the age of 26 years is:**

- To return to training, practice or competition the curler or, if the curler is under 18 years of age, the curler's parent or guardian provide confirmation to WNCC that,
  - The curler has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and has not been diagnosed as having a concussion, and
  - has been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition by the physician or nurse practitioner.
- Follow a diagnosed concussion curlers must follow the Graduated Return To Physical Activity steps as outlined by a medical professional
  - WNCC coaches parents/guardians, and curlers will commit to supporting the return-to-curling process and collaboratively implement the Return to Physical Activity (R2P) plan as outlined by a medical practitioner

# West Northumberland Curling Club

## 4.4.1 Concussion Prevention

### Objective:

This policy will provide guidance in preventing concussions among curling participants at WNCC.

### Policy:

WNCC recommends that curlers, including, but not limited to, novice, beginning and developing curlers:

- Use double grippers when on the ice and not delivering a stone
- Wear a helmet or other head protection

WNCC **requires** that all curlers under the age of 13 years:

- Use double grippers when on the ice and not delivering a stone
- Wear a helmet or other head protection

WNCC encourages all curlers, coaches, officials, volunteers, and other curling participants to recognize and be aware of potential falling hazards and behaviours. Examples are, but not limited to:

- Improper footwear
- Unaware of position of curling stones on ice during play
- Proximity to the boards during play
- Stepping on to the ice surface
- Water on the ice
- sweeping

# **West Northumberland Curling Club**

## **WNCC Concussion Code of Conduct**

### **Curlers and coaches/instructors will help prevent concussions by:**

- Wearing the proper equipment for curling and wearing them correctly.
- Respecting the rules of curling.
- Develop skills and strengths so that curlers can participate to the best of their abilities.
- Commitment to fair play and respect for all curlers.

### **Curlers and coaches/instructors will care for the health and safety of themselves and others by taking concussions seriously, and understand that:**

- I will respect the other curlers, coaches and instructors by following the WNCC Concussion Policy regarding mandated calls to 911
- A concussion is a brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- A blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes the brain to move around inside the skull may cause a concussion.
- Loss of consciousness is not required to have had a concussion.
- A person with a suspected concussion should stop participating **immediately**.
- A commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to WNCC when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion.
- I will not hide concussion symptoms and will encourage fellow curlers not to hide their symptoms.
- To participate in further training, practice or competition with a possible concussion increases my risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms, and increases my risk of other injuries.
- After a concussive injury time is required for a full recovery.
- All curlers under the age of 26 years must follow the Return to Sport Protocol as outlined in the Concussion Policy.

# West Northumberland Curling Club

## Concussion Awareness Resources

**\*These informational guidelines have been prepared for general informational purposes only. They are not intended to and do not constitute any medical advice and do not contain any medical diagnoses, symptom assessments or medical opinions.**

Recent research has made it clear that a concussion can have a significant impact on an individual's health and well-being. In fact, research shows that activities that require concentration can actually cause concussion symptoms to reappear or worsen. If a concussion is not identified and properly managed, it can result in permanent brain damage and, in rare occasions, even death.

Research also suggests that an individual who suffers a second concussion before he/she is symptom-free from the first concussion is susceptible to Second Impact Syndrome – a rare condition that causes rapid and severe brain swelling and often catastrophic results.

Awareness of the signs and symptoms of concussion and knowledge of how to properly manage a concussion is critical to recovery and helping to ensure the individual is not returning to physical activities too soon, risking further complications.

**A concussion is a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor. It is critical that someone with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.**

### **A concussion:**

- is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);

- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;

- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness); and,

- Cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs.

- Signs/symptoms can appear right after the injury, or may appear within hours or days of the injury.

- The signs/symptoms may be different for everyone.

- An individual may be reluctant to report symptoms because of a fear that they will be removed from the activity, or their status on a team or in a game could be jeopardized.

- It may be difficult for younger children (under the age of 10) and those with special needs or where English/French is not their first language to communicate how they are feeling.

- Signs for younger children (under the age of 10) may not be as obvious as in older children/adults.

Revised: December 12, 2019

Reviewed: June 10, 2021

# West Northumberland Curling Club

## Common Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

### Possible Signs Observed

Sign: A sign is something that will be observed by another person (e.g., parent/guardian, teacher, coach, supervisor, peer).

#### Physical

- vomiting
- slurred speech
- slowed reaction time
- poor coordination or balance
- blank stare/glassy-eyed/dazed or vacant look
- decreased playing ability
- loss of consciousness or lack of responsiveness
- lying motionless on the ground or slow to get up
- amnesia
- seizure or convulsion
- grabbing or clutching of head

#### Cognitive

- difficulty concentrating
- easily distracted
- general confusion
- cannot remember things that happened before and after the injury
- does not know time, date, place, class, type of activity in which he/she was participating
- slowed reaction time (e.g., answering questions or following directions)

#### Emotional/Behavioural

- strange or inappropriate emotions (e.g., laughing, crying, getting angry easily)

#### Sleep Disturbance

- drowsiness
- insomnia

### Possible Symptoms Reported

Symptom: A symptom is something the student will feel/report.

#### Physical

- headache
- pressure in head
- neck pain
- feeling off/not right
- ringing in the ears
- seeing double or blurry/loss of vision
- seeing stars, flashing lights
- pain at physical site of injury
- nausea/stomach ache/pain
- balance problems or dizziness
- fatigue or feeling tired
- sensitivity to light or noise

#### Cognitive

- difficulty concentrating or remembering
- slowed down, fatigue or low energy
- dazed or in a fog

#### Emotional/Behavioural

- irritable, sad, more emotional than usual
- nervous, anxious, depressed

#### Sleep Disturbance

- drowsy
- sleeping more/less than usual
- difficulty falling asleep

# West Northumberland Curling Club

## Government of Ontario Concussion Resources:

Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018, S.O. 2018, c.1

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/18r01>

Ontario Regulation 161/19: General

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/190161>

Rowan's Law: Concussion Awareness Resources

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-awareness-resources>

Ages 10 years and under

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-government-concussion-awareness-resource-e-booklet-ages-10-and-under>

Ages 11 to 14 years

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-government-concussion-awareness-resource-e-booklet-ages-11-14>

Ages 15 years and over

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-government-concussion-awareness-resource-e-booklet-ages-15-and-up>

## Curling Resources

Ontario Curling Association Health and Safety Program, Section 3.8

Ontario Curling Association - Mandatory Policies, Concussion Management, Policy BD-PSO-018

Ontario Curling Council – Policy Manual, Concussion Guidelines, Policy OCC-018

Revised: December 12, 2019

Reviewed: June 10, 2021