



# BIATHLON ONTARIO

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## **BIATHLON ONTARIO - CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Ref: A. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport – Concussion Guidelines, May 2013

Biathlon Ontario is committed to seeing practices recommended by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, as well as Biathlon Canada, be used to ensure that those diagnosed with a concussion are properly reintroduced to the biathlon programs.

### **Definitions**

1. **"Qualified Health Care Provider"** means a health care provider who:
  - a. is licensed in the country in which the incident has occurred;
  - b. may evaluate and manage a concussion within the health care provider's scope of practice; and
  - c. within three years before the day on which the written statement is made, have successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of a concussion.
  
2. **"Sporting event"** means any of the following athletic activities that are organized, operated, managed, or sponsored by Biathlon Ontario, such as a game, a practice, a clinic, a sports camp, an educational class, a competition, or a tryout.
  
3. **"Traumatic head injury"** means an injury to the head arising from blunt trauma, an acceleration force, or a deceleration force, with one of the following observed or self-reported conditions attributable to the injury:
  - a. transient confusion, disorientation, or impaired consciousness,
  - b. dysfunction of memory,
  - c. loss of consciousness, or
  - d. signs of other neurological or neuro psychological dysfunction, including:
    - i. Seizures,
    - ii. Irritability,
    - iii. Lethargy,
    - iv. Vomiting,
    - v. Headache,
    - vi. Dizziness, or
    - vii. Fatigue.

### **General Concussion Description**

A concussion is a brain injury, and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works.

Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and even death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious.

Symptoms and signs of concussions (see traumatic head injury above) may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to appear fully. If your athlete reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away. You cannot see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

### **Nature and Risk**

A concussion or a traumatic head injury; and continuing to participate in a sporting event after sustaining a concussion or a traumatic head injury can leave the athlete vulnerable to greater injury or death. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even severe brain swelling with devastating and even fatal consequences.

### **Policy Requirements**

If coaches, volunteers, parents or legal guardians suspect an athlete (a child who is under the age of 18) of sustaining a concussion or traumatic head injury while participating in a sporting event; the athlete shall be removed immediately. Upon removal of athlete suspected of sustaining concussion or a traumatic head injury, a written medical clearance from a qualified health care provider is required before the athlete can return to participate in any sporting event.

It is the responsibility of local clubs to produce and implement local concussion management policies that will govern local sporting event.

The concussion action plan outlined below will take into effect when sporting events are managed by Biathlon Ontario.

### **Concussion Action Plan**

What should a coach, parent and/or legal guardian do when a concussion is suspected?

1. Initial Response  
(See Ref A – Appendix A Initial Response – Removal from Activity)
  - a. Participant who is unconscious
    - i. Initiate facilities emergency action plan and **call 911**.
    - ii. If applicable, contact the child/youth's parent/guardian to inform them of the injury and that their child is being transported to the hospital.
    - iii. Stay with the individual until Emergency Medical Services arrives.
    - iv. Monitor and document any physical, emotional and/or cognitive changes.
  - b. Participant who is conscious
    - i. Remove the participant from the activity immediately.
    - ii. If signs are observed or symptoms are reported, a concussion should be suspected.
    - iii. If a concussion is not suspected (i.e., signs are not observed and symptoms are not reported), the participant may resume physical activity; however, if applicable, a parent/guardian should be contacted and informed of the incident.
    - iv. If applicable, contact the parent/guardian and inform them of the injury and the need to be examined by a qualified health care provider.
    - v. Stay with the injured participant until a parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives.
    - vi. Monitor and document any physical, emotional and/or cognitive changes.
2. Medical Examination

Following examination by a qualified health care provider and prior to the individual returning to physical activity, the coach, administrator and/or supervisor must be informed of the results.

- a. If **No Concussion** is Diagnosed: the participant may return to physical activities; Or

- b. If a **Concussion is Diagnosed**: the medically supervised gradual Return to Physical Activity (R2P) plan is put in place (See Reference A - Appendix B for Return to Physical Activity Flow Chart).
3. Return to Physical Activity (R2P) (following a diagnosed concussion):
  - a. A participant with a diagnosed concussion follows a medically supervised and individualized gradual Return to Physical Activity (R2P) plan as outlined in Ref A, page 5.
  - b. It is critical to recovery that the individualized R2P plan is developed through a collaborative team approach. This team should include:
    - i. the concussed individual
    - ii. her/his parents/guardians (if applicable)
    - iii. his/her local coach, administrator and/supervisor
    - iv. school staff, including teachers, coaches etc. (if applicable)
    - v. a qualified health care provider
    - vi. Biathlon Ontario Head Coach and/or VP Technical

Ongoing communication and monitoring by all members of the team will be essential to successful recovery.

### **Concussion Training**

Before being considered for employment or independent contract position, applicants for a coaching position, must have successfully completed the NCCP “Making Head Way” eLearning module. Proof of completion is required at the time of application submission.

Biathlon Ontario will provide information and educational links on concussion awareness to its membership

### **Resources**

Coaches Association of Canada

- Making Head Way Concussion eLearning Modules: <http://www.coach.ca/-p153487>

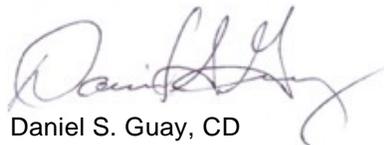
Coaches Association of Ontario

- Return to Play: <http://coachesontario.ca/events-funding/rtp/>
- Other Resources: <http://coachesontario.ca/events-funding/resources/>

### **Policy Review and Amendments**

This policy is to be reviewed every four years for information accuracy.

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