

---

## Southern Canberra Gymnastics Club CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY

---

POLICY NAME:	SCGC Concussion Management Policy
DATE OF ISSUE:	4 April 2024
REVIEW TIMING:	Annually
NEXT REVIEW	September/October 2025

---

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The **Southern Canberra Gymnastics Club** (SCGC) is accountable for and is committed to providing a safe environment for all its gymnasts, staff, members and any visitors to the SCGC facility. This means having policies, rules, regulations, standards, and guidelines that promote safe programs in a safe environment, overseen by qualified/certified personnel including policies and procedures regarding the management of injuries to staff or gymnasts whether the injury occurred within the club/club grounds or not.

SCGC treats all injuries to all gymnasts seriously and has a specific policy and detailed procedures relating to the management of injuries and the conditions surrounding the injured person's return to training or work.

This policy complements the SCGC Injury Policy & Procedures and must be read in conjunction with that document.

SCGC has broken out this specific concussion management policy due to the serious and potentially lifetime impacts of this injury and believes the most important element in the management of concussion must always be the welfare of the participant, in both the short and long term.

### 2 SCOPE & APPLICABILITY

This policy covers the management of SCGC gymnasts and staff who sustain a suspected concussion during any activity within the gym or sustained while away from SCGC, e.g. at home or at school. The policy also covers their return to training or work.

The policy aims to ensure that athletes with a suspected concussion in the club receive timely and appropriate care and proper management to allow them to return to training or work safely.

The policy applies to all SCGC staff, gymnasts, volunteers, and visitors/parents in the SCGC premises.

### 3 POLICY STATEMENT

#### 3.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- SCGC considers all concussion related injuries, confirmed or suspected, to be a serious injury that must be managed accordingly.
- SCGC adopts the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS)/Australian Sports Commission (ASC) Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT) 6 as an integral part of this policy.
- SCGC has developed specific SCGC Concussion Management Guidelines based on the ASC Guidelines but providing more detailed requirements and obligations.

- This policy must be read in conjunction with the SCGC Injury Policy and Procedures.
- This policy applies regardless of whether the injury occurred in the SCGC facility or elsewhere.

## ***“IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT”***

### **3.2 CONCUSSION IN GYMNASTICS**

A concussion can be sustained by direct forces (e.g. a blow to the head), or indirect forces (e.g. a blow to the body, which causes the head to move rapidly).

Causes of concussion in gymnastics include:

- Direct contact with the apparatus/equipment or safety mats
- The whiplash effect of neck flexion and extension (head forced forward and backward)
- Rotational forces of the head and neck are not as common but may lead to more severe symptoms.

Direct, indirect, and rotational impacts are all possible in gymnastics. Gymnasts may land hard on their buttocks and sustain a concussion through impact forces transmitted up the trunk to the brain.

### **3.3 RECOGNISING CONCUSSION**

A medical practitioner should formally diagnose a concussion, however SCGC staff, athletes (as appropriate) and event volunteers must be able to recognise a suspected concussion. SCGC will arrange the appropriate training on a regular basis.

All staff must be vigilant in the gym and be on the lookout for participants colliding with:

- another participant,
- an apparatus or piece of equipment, or
- the floor or the ground,

and has hit or is suspected of having hit their head.

### **3.4 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR SUSPECTED CONCUSSION**

#### **3.4.1 OVERALL REQUIREMENTS**

A comprehensive set of concussion management guidelines are associated with this policy and must be applied for all suspected concussions.

All participants with concussion or suspected concussion need a medical assessment by a medical doctor. Generally, one is not present at the SCGC venue and therefore if the participant is showing any signs whatsoever of concussion, they must be referred to a local general practice or hospital emergency department and/or their parents advised. (The Erindale Medical Centre across McBryde Cres may be contacted if appropriate).

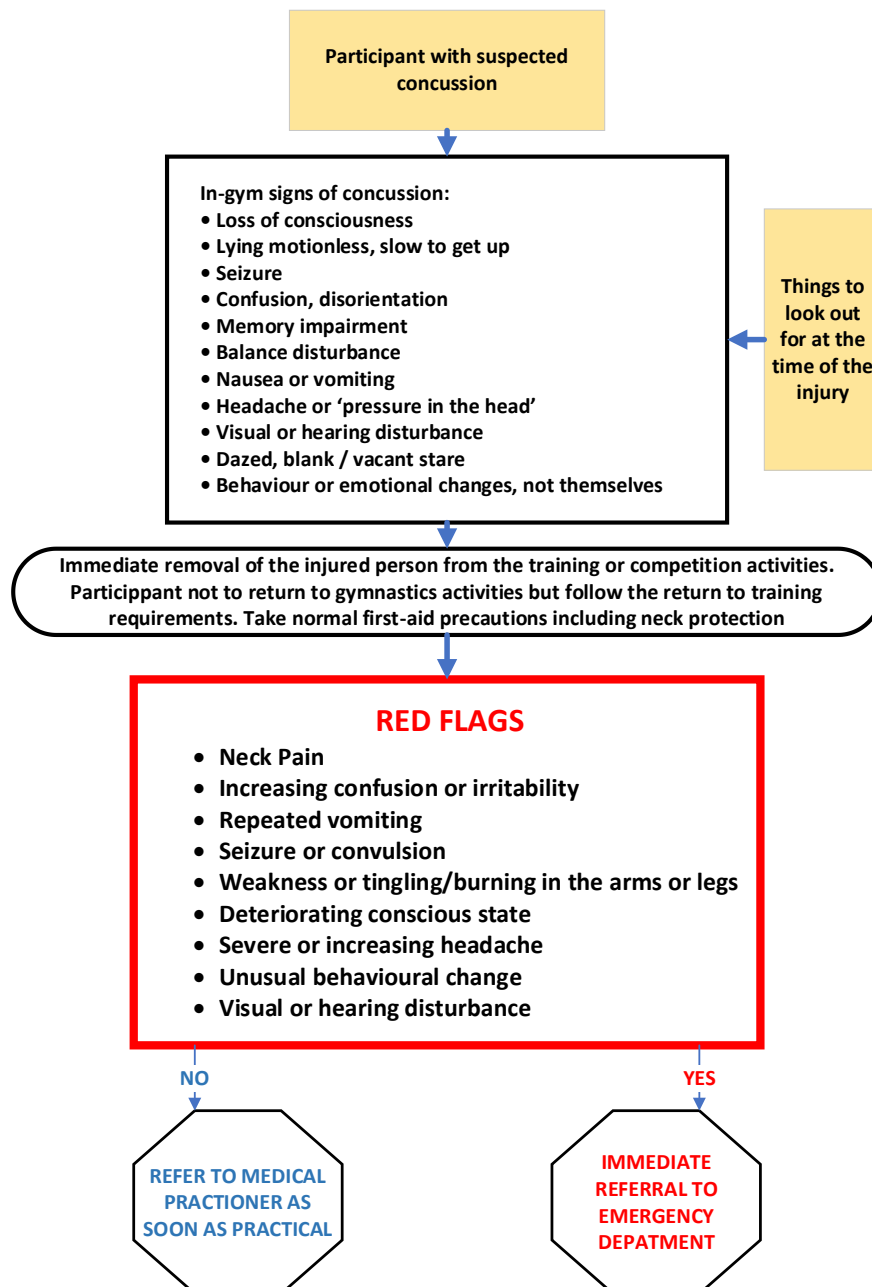
The management of sport related concussions in children and adolescents requires special treatments suitable for the developing child. Children have physical and developmental differences – less developed neck muscles; increased head to neck ratio; and brain cells and pathways that are still developing. Children and adolescents may have greater susceptibility to concussion, they may also take longer to recover, and they may be at risk of severe consequences such as second impact syndrome.

Managing concussion in children and adolescents therefore requires different standards and a more conservative approach. Children typically take longer to recover from concussion than adults (up to four weeks).

The priority when managing concussion in children should be returning to school and learning, ahead of returning to training.

### 3.4.2 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The diagram below provides an overview of SCGC’s management guidelines for the management of suspected concussion.



### 3.5 CONCUSSION SUSTAINED AWAY FROM THE CLUB

#### 3.5.1 Notification

SCGC must advise all parents of gymnasts and all employees that notification of an injury sustained away from the SCGC venue, for example at home or at school the injury must be provided to the Club as soon as practical so that the Club and the applicable coaches are aware of the situation.

The notification should preferably be by email to the relevant Program Manager at [Dave@southerncanberra.net](mailto:Dave@southerncanberra.net) or [Carlene@southerncanberra.net](mailto:Carlene@southerncanberra.net) and cc'd to the Administration Manager at [gymclub@southerncanberra.net](mailto:gymclub@southerncanberra.net). However the notification may also be by phone to the relevant Program Manager. In that event the Program Manager must advise the Administration Manager of the details and the Administration Manager must follow up by email with the person concerned to verify the recorded details.

The use of social media platforms, including group chat platform, is NOT to be relied upon for such notification and will not be accepted by SCGC as formal notification. Not all coaches/administrators are on all such platforms and group chat platforms can have a large volume of messages at any time and hence, the risk of the notification being missed is considered by the Club to be too high.

Preferably when providing such notification, the parent(s) should come to the club and discuss the situation and any specific management protocols with the relevant Program Manager and coach. The Program Manager will advise the Administration Manager who will jointly record all such advice.

Parents are asked specifically to NOT send their child into the gym to advise of any such management protocols or of any return to training issues associated with the concussion. While SCGC appreciates that children are most probably able to communicate such matters, the club requires that for any return to training from a serious injuries such as concussion, the parents must formally advise in writing to the Program Manager and cc'd to the Administration Manager of any injury management/return to training protocols detailed by a medical practitioner.

#### 3.5.2 Follow-up

The Administration Manager and the applicable Program Manager must follow up with the gymnast/employee during the recovery period and provide any appropriate support the Club is able to provide.

### 3.6 RETURN TO GYMNASTICS TRAINING

#### 3.6.1 General principles

The return to training requirements detailed in this policy as well as in the Concussion Management Guidelines and the SCGC Injury Policy & Procedures apply to confirmed concussion injuries.

Managing concussion is a shared responsibility between the participant, coach, club, parents, and medical doctor. Open communication is essential, and information should be shared between all parties involved with the participant.

In every case, the decision regarding timing of return to gymnastics should be made by a medical doctor.

### 3.6.2 Conservative approach

The Club adopts a conservative approach to the return to training or work following a serious injury, including concussion. We will generally follow the SCGC guidelines which are based on the ASC guidelines and depending on the type and severity of the injury will work with the associated medical practitioners when developing the return to training/work strategy.

No one can decide that a participant with a suspected concussion may resume participating on the same day or same competition other than a medical doctor. This includes the participant themselves, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, or staff.

If any time off school is required due to memory and processing problems, then training/work cannot resume until successful return to school without worsening of symptoms.

The graduated return to sport framework in the SCGC guidelines is to be used as a guide but any specific criteria advised by a medical practitioner for the return to training/work override this framework.

### 3.6.3 Medical clearance

**Without a medical clearance the participant is not permitted to return to competition, training or work despite any suggestion from the participant, parent and/or a coach.**

Regardless of the severity a concussed participant (gymnast or employee) must provide a medical clearance to the Club before they can return to training or work. This is for both the safety of the gymnast or employee and to comply with our insurance liability requirements.

Medical clearances are to be emailed to the applicable Program Manager – for MAG [Dave@southerncanberra.net](mailto:Dave@southerncanberra.net) and for WAG [Carlene@southerncanberra.net](mailto:Carlene@southerncanberra.net) and to the Administration Manager at [gymclub@southerncanberra.net](mailto:gymclub@southerncanberra.net).

Parents/staff may advise by phone to the Club or the relevant Program Manager that a medical clearance is available and the clearance handed to the Administration Manager or the Program Manager before starting training.

## 3.7 POLICY PROMOTION

SCGC will post this policy on its website and also ensure the SCGC Staff Manual summarises and refers to this policy. SCGC will post copies of CRT6 around the SCGC venue.

Signs informing the requirement for medical clearances will also be displayed at the entrance of the gym.

### 3.8 RELATED DOCUMENTS

#### Related Documents

- Concussion Recognition Tool Version 6 (CRT6)
- Australian Sports Commission [Concussion in Australian Sport | Concussion in Australian Sport \(concussioninsport.gov.au\)](https://www.concussioninsport.gov.au)

### 3.9 REVISION RECORD

Date	Issue	Author	Description of Revision
Apr 24	1.0	Bob Weight	First issue.