



Concussion Policy

Per Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) rules and regulations, players suspected of suffering a concussion in practice or in a game should be removed from play immediately for assessment, and are prohibited from returning to play that day. The player may return to athletic activity only when a licensed healthcare provider has provided written clearance, which may be emailed to the club administrator and team manager.

The Herndon Youth Soccer Concussion policy, as mandated by the Virginia Youth Soccer Association, is to achieve the following objectives:

1. Reduce concussion risks for participants;
2. Increase awareness among coaches and families of concussion risks and effects, and proper management of concussion; and
3. Comply with Virginia State Laws regarding policies and procedures for concussion management in youth athletes.

Coaches should remove athletes with a suspected concussion if any of the following symptoms are present after a blow to the head or sudden fall. Symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Loss of Consciousness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Amnesia - Retrograde/Anterograde (Memory loss of events leading up to or occurring after the suspected concussion event)
- Sensitivity to light
- Irritability
- Feeling in a fog
- Loss of appetite
- Blurred vision
- Difficulty Concentrating

Symptoms Reported by Athlete may include but are limited to:

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness

- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right” or is “feeling down”

Herndon Youth Soccer Procedure for return to play:

In the event a HYS player sustains a suspected head impact or concerning injury she or he will be removed from the activity immediately. This includes but is not exclusively limited to games, practices, skill sessions, other on-field activity, and off-field activities.

- If a player is not able to return to the activity, that player shall not be allowed to return to a HYS activity until after he or she is reviewed and cleared by a licensed health care provider, per Virginia State law and documented to the HYS Club Administrator, and Team Manager.
- If emergency medical care is needed, the coach/manager shall call 911 and have the player taken to the ER, along with the parental permission form obtained from each family before the start of the season.
- In any situation, a parent may elect to remove his or her child from the activity if the parent is concerned about a head injury or potential head injury.
- Parental consent alone is not acceptable for return to play
- Coach consent alone is not acceptable for return to play.

Heading Policy

Per guidelines established by Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA), the governing body of youth soccer in this state, heading is NOT permitted in programs considered U11 and younger.

11U and Younger.

- US Soccer guidelines are players in 11U programs and younger shall not engage in heading, either in practice or in games.
- For games involving 11U and younger, the following rule is enforced: Whenever the ball strikes a player in the head, play is stopped. The proper restart depends upon whether the player deliberately played the ball with his or her head. If deliberate, the proper restart is an indirect free kick to the opposing team. If this occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If the play by the head is deemed inadvertent, then the proper restart is a dropped ball.

12U & 13U age groups (Grades 6-7)

- U.S. Soccer guidelines are for players 12U and 13U programs, that heading in training is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per day, per week.
- All coaches should be instructed to teach and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for heading the ball.

14U and older age groups (Grade 8, 16U-19U): no restriction.

For additional information:

Virginia Youth Soccer Association: <https://www.vysa.com/Default.aspx?tabid=2608123>

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html>

US Youth Soccer: https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/news/concussion_resources_from_cdc/

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