

**West Carleton Skating Club**

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| **Policy:** | **Concussion** |
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| **Revised:** | **June 26, 2016** |
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The West Carleton Skating Club (WCSC) is committed to maintaining the health and safety of its athletes, coaches and officials and believes that their health is of paramount importance. The WCSC recognizes the potential danger and long-term health consequences of this often difficult to diagnose form of traumatic brain injury. The Policy is intended to provide easy-to-understand guidelines related to individuals who have been diagnosed with or are suspected of having a concussion.

**A CONCUSSION is**:

* a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g. headaches, 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);
* cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs.
* can result in symptoms that are evident immediately, or may evolve and persist over the course of hours, days or even months.

If the individual(s) responsible for those who are participating in the organized activity believes that, following a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head may have caused a concussion, they must take immediate action.

If the participant is unconscious as a result of a trauma occurred during a skating (or off-ice) activity:

* Dial 911
* Do not move the participant
* Wait for paramedics to arrive

If the participant is conscious after the trauma:

* The participant must be removed from the practice (on or off the ice), training, competition, camp or clinic as soon as it is safe to do so and immediately seek medical attention. – The participant shall not be left alone.
* Symptoms should be documented and may include:

▪ Dizziness ▪ Headaches ▪ Nausea ▪ Neck Pain ▪ Sensitivity to light and noise ▪ Impaired balance and vision ▪ Difficulty concentrating or remembering ▪ General confusion ▪ Depression or irritability ▪ Drowsiness or difficulty falling asleep.

Coaches are never to make the concussion determination in the field on their own.

**If there is any doubt as to whether a concussion has occurred, it is assumed that a concussion has occurred.**

The participant’s parent/guardian or emergency contact will be contacted and they will be required to have the injury properly assessed at a hospital or medical clinic.

Participants (whether on WCSC ice or in another activity) who have suffered a concussion, or are suspected to have suffered a concussion, must undergo a medical evaluation, preferably by someone who is trained in concussion management, for diagnosis and guidance to determine the extent of the injury.

**At a minimum, this must be done by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. Before returning to skating, a Return to Skate Form must be completed and submitted to WCSC.**

* The form must be completed by a medical doctor and considerations/restrictions with respect to returning to skate must be documented.
* The document must indicate that the individual is symptom-free and able to return to full participation in physical activity.

**A Return to Skate Form is required following ALL concussions, even those that did not occur while skating or participating in any form of off-ice activity run by the club. Return to Skate Forms are to be returned to the STARskate Coordinator - a copy to be provided to the primary coach.**

*Personal information used, disclosed, secured or retained by the WCSC will be held in confidentiality and safely for the purpose for which it is collected.*