**Concussion Information Sheet**

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are cause by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with 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 death if not recognized and managed properly**. In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of a concussion, or you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

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| **Symptoms may include one or more of the following:** | |
| * Headaches * “Pressure in head” * Nausea or vomiting * Neck pain * Balance problems or dizziness * Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision * Sensitivity to light or noise * Feeling sluggish or slowed down * Feeling foggy or groggy * Drowsiness * Change in sleep patterns | * Amnesia * “Don’t feel right” * Fatigue or low energy * Symptoms may include one or more of the following: * Nervousness or anxiety * Irritability * Sadness or more emotional * Confusion * Concentration or memory problems * Repeating the same questions/comment |
| **Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:** | |
| * Appears dazed * Vacant facial expression * Confused about next event * Forgets swims * Is unsure of meet, event, or heat * Moves clumsily or displays incoordination * Answers questions slowly | * Slurred speech * Shows behavior or personality changes * Can’t recall events prior to hit * Can’t recall events after event * Seizures or convulsions * Any change in typical behavior or personality * Loses consciousness |

**WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF MY CHILD KEEPS PLAYING WITH A CONCUSSION OR RETURNS TOO SOON?**

Swimmers with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from activity immediately. Continuing to swim with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young swimmer especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the swimmer suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage swimmer will often under report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coached, parents and students is key for swimmer’s safety.

**IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS SUFFERED A CONCUSSION**

Any swimmer even suspected of suffering a concussion will be removed from the meet or practice immediately. No swimmer may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. This medical clearance must be presented to a coaches or managers with the Twin Lake Swim Team. Close observation of the swimmer should continue for several hours. The new “Zackery Lystedt Law” in Washington now requires the consistent and uniform implementation of long and well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years: 1) “a youth swimmer who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or meet shall be removed from competition at that time” and 2)“may not return to play until the swimmer is evaluated by a licensed heath care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider.”