**St. Francis Concussion Management Protocol**

Concussion management begins with ***pre-season baseline testing***. The following sport will receive a pre-season baseline assessment for concussion via ImPACT testing: Volleyball, Water Polo, Basketball, Soccer, Lacrosse, Softball, Diving, and Pole Vault. Other student athletes who want to participate in baseline testing may communicate with the Certified Athletic Trainer to set up a testing appointment. Please read more about this testing in the ImPACT section.

1. The Certified Athletic Trainer will conduct the ImPACT test for new athletes and returning Juniors in the sports listed above. Students who sustain a concussion in a previous high school or club season will be asked to re-take the baseline test.
2. In the event of a suspected concussion, the student-athlete will be re-assessed and compared to pre-season baseline measures according to the outlined protocol below.
3. The Certified Athletic Trainer will keep a copy of the ImPACT baseline record on file. A passport number will also be emailed to students so their health care provider can have access to the information.

An athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion will be evaluated by the Certified Athletic Trainer using the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT2). The athletic trainer will notify the athlete’s parent ASAP to develop an evaluation and treatment plan. Ideally, an assessment of symptoms will be performed at the time of the injury and then serially thereafter (i.e. 2-3 hours post-injury, 24 hours, 48 hours, etc.). The presence or absence of symptoms will dictate the inclusion of additional neurocognitive testing.

Any student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion **shall not return** to activity for the state law mandated **24 hour rest period**. Medical clearance must be given by a physician for the athlete to return to activity. Once the clearance is given the athletic trainer will be involved in the return to play protocol.

If deemed medically necessary by a physician, athletes at St. Francis High School have access to a Student Resource Coordinator who will create a Concussion Care Plan (CCP) to help students who may need academic accommodation to properly heal. The Coordinator will be in contact with students suspected of sustaining a concussion and the physician will complete the CCP form. It will be necessary to have a weekly updated note from the physician in order to remain on the CCP and receive academic accommodation. While the student is recovering they will not be cleared to return to activity.

**Concussion Assessment:**

NO ATHLETE SUSPECTED OF HAVING A CONCUSSION IS PERMITTED TO RETURN TO PLAY THE SAME DAY, AND NO ATHLETE IS PERMITTED TO RETURN TO PLAY WHILE SYMPTOMATIC FOLLOWING A CONCUSSION. The following steps will be taken:

1. **Baseline testing: conducted on each athlete upon entering season of selected sport**
2. **Time of injury: clinical evaluation and symptom check; referral if necessary**
3. **Next Day: follow-up evaluation by athletic trainer/ doctor and symptom check**
4. **Days to follow: Follow-up evaluations daily to track symptom recovery; Athlete is seen by doctor if not already seen. Academic accommodation is put in place if necessary**
5. **Once athlete becomes asymptomatic and has been cleared by physician:**
   1. Athlete performs a post-injury ImPACT test.
   2. If the post-injury results of the ImPACT test are at least 95% of baseline scores and the athlete remains asymptomatic for 24 hours following the test, the athletic trainer will begin *a graduated exertional return to play (RTP)* *protocol* (see below) with the athlete to assess for increasing signs and symptoms. Symptoms should be reassessed immediately following exertional activities.
   3. If the athlete remains asymptomatic 24 hours following the first step(s) of the *graduated* *exertional RTP protocol*, the athlete can progress to next step of the *graduated* *exertional RTP protocol*.

IF AT ANY POINT DIRUNG THIS PROCESS THE ATHLETE BECOMES SYMPTOMATIC, THE AHTLETE SHOULD BE RE-ASSESSED DAILY UNTIL ASYMPTOMATIC. ONCE ASYMPTOMATIC, THE ATHLETE SHOULD THEN FOLLOW STEPS 1-4 BELOW.

***Gradual Exertional Return to Play Protocol:***

This exertional protocol allows a gradual increase in volume and intensity during the return to play process. The athlete is monitored for any concussion-like signs/symptoms during and after each exertional activity. No athlete can return to full activity or competitions until they are asymptomatic in non-contact and full-contact activities and cleared by the physician and the athletic trainer. The following steps are **NOT** performed on the same day. The athlete must be asymptomatic for at least 24 hours before beginning the next step.

***Exertion Step 1:*** 20 minutes of aerobic exercise (stationary bike or light jogging)

***Exertion Step 2:*** 10-15 minutes of anaerobic exercise (wind sprints, sit-ups, push-ups, etc.)

***Exertion Step 3:*** Non-contact practice and monitor for symptoms

***Exertion Step 4:*** Full sport participation in a practice

***Exertion Step 5:*** Full sport participation in game or scrimmage

**ImPACT Testing:**

In order to better manage concussions sustained by our student-athletes, St. Francis Athletics is continuing the use of a software tool called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). ImPACT is a computerized exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during competition, ImPACT is used as one of the tools to help determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed.

The computerized exam is given to athletes before beginning contact sport practice or competition. This non-invasive test is set up in “video-game” type format and takes about 30-45 minutes to complete. It is simple, and actually many athletes enjoy the challenge of taking the test. Essentially, the ImPACT test is a preseason physical of the brain. It tracks information such as memory, processing speed, reaction time, speed, and concentration. It, however, is not an IQ test.

If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will re-take the test. Both the preseason and post-injury test data is used by the athletic trainer to help evaluate the injury. The information gathered can also be shared with your family doctor. The test data will enable these health professionals to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe for the injured athlete. If an injury of this nature occurs to your child, you will be promptly contacted with all the details. Medical clearance is required for your student-athlete to return to play.

The ImPACT testing procedures are non-invasive, and they pose no risks to your student-athlete. This program provides us the best available information for managing concussions and preventing potential brain damage that can occur with multiple concussions. The St. Francis administration, coaching, and athletic training staffs are striving to keep your child’s health and safety at the forefront of the student athletic experience. If you have any further questions regarding this program please feel free to contact our Assistant Athletic Director for Sports Medicine at

(916) 737-5048 or via email at kketcham@stfrancishs.org.