



Concussion Quick Fact Sheet for INSTRUCTORS

As with any full contact activity, Kendo carries an inherent risk of injury, including head and neck injuries. There are steps you can take to minimize these risks within your club.

This sheet has information to help you prevent concussions and other serious brain injuries, as well as how to recognize signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs. For more in-depth information, please refer to the ***Kendo Ontario Concussion Protocol***. Every club should also ensure every member is familiar with the ***Pre-Bogu Concussion Education Sheet***, especially prior to wearing bogu, or armour for the first time.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth.

How can I help to keep members safe?

Talk with members about the importance of reporting a concussion:

- Making sure members understand that their safety comes first and if something does not feel right, or they feel that they may have a concussion, to always report it

Create a culture of safety at practices, events, and tournaments

Keep up-to-date on concussion information

Check and maintain equipment and practice facilities

- Ensuring that members understand the proper and safe use of equipment (including shinai, bokuto, bogu...etc) and the maintenance of such equipment
- Ensuring that proper technique and control is done when practicing with a live human target, such as using the proper amount and type of force when hitting and making sure that fists do not make contact with the target's head or men on the follow through
- Members should be encouraged to only wear bogu sets that fit properly, especially the men. **"If it doesn't fit, don't wear it"**, even if it delays their Kendo development.

Keep emergency contact information handy

- Club members should provide an updated emergency contact in case of emergency situations
- Clubs with junior members should ensure a parent/guardian is present during practice or that you have their contact information

When should I suspect a concussion?

A concussion should be suspected in any athlete who sustains a significant impact to the head, face, neck or body and reports ANY symptoms and demonstrates ANY visual signs of a concussion. A concussion should also be suspected if an athlete reports ANY concussion symptoms to one of their fellow teammates, parents, instructors/coaches or if anyone witnesses an athlete exhibiting ANY of the visual signs of concussion. Some athletes will develop symptoms immediately while others will develop delayed symptoms (beginning 24-48 hours after the injury).

A person does not need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion!

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Examples of Possible Observed Signs:

- Vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Loss of consciousness/lack of responsiveness
- General confusion
- Loss/change in memory
- Slowed reaction time
- Forgetfulness, poor memory
- Irritability and crankiness
- Lying motionless on the playing surface
- Balance/gait difficulties
- Motor incoordination: stumbling, slow/laboured movements

Examples of Possible Reported Symptoms:

- Headache
- Neck pain
- Feeling “off” or “not right”
- Double/blurry vision
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light/noise
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Feeling more fatigued than normal
- Fatigue or low energy
- Balance problems
- Erratic emotions
- Sadness

*Please refer to the **Pre-Bogu Concussion Education Sheet** and the **Kendo Ontario Concussion Protocol** for a more complete list of signs and symptoms.

What should I do if I suspect a concussion?

If in doubt, remove the member from play.
Keep the athlete out of play until cleared by a healthcare professional.
Inform the member’s parent(s)/guardians about the possible concussion/injury.
Ask for **MEDICAL CLEARANCE LETTER** from healthcare professional to clear the athlete for safe return to play

When can they return to school/work and sports?

Please see the **Pre-Bogu Concussion Education Sheet** and/or **Kendo Ontario Concussion Protocol** for the **Return-to-School Strategy** and **Kendo-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy**.

How long will it take for the athlete to recover?

Most practitioners who sustain a concussion will make a complete recovery within 1-2 weeks while most youth practitioners will recover within 1-4 weeks.

Approximately 15-30% of patients will experience persistent symptoms (>2 weeks for adults; >4 weeks for youth) that may require additional medical assessment and management.