

ONTARIO RIFLE ASSOCIATION CONCUSSION POLICY

As research continues to indicate that concussions are a major concern within Ontario amateur sports the Ontario Council of Shooters (OCS) has developed a Concussion Policy that the Ontario Rifle Association fully supports and is included below. Although the ORA does not provide contact activities the awareness and education of concussion prevention is paramount for its membership.

1. OBJECTIVE

This policy has been developed to provide a foundation for the OCS to support and promote concussion prevention and management strategies within sport, recreation and physical activity providing organizations in the Province of Ontario.

This policy has been prepared for general informational purposes only. It is not intended to and should not constitute any medical or legal advice and does not contain any medical diagnoses, symptom assessments or medical opinions.

2. DEFINITION*

A concussion:

- is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, 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); and,
- cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs

**This definition adopted from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Concussion Guidelines document available at: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/concussions/docs/mcsc_concussion_guide_en.pdf*

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The OCS takes seriously the health and well-being of all participants in sport and recreation activities and is committed to helping all Canadians lead safe, healthy, active lives.

Although our sport does not have any reported cases of concussion, the OCS has a role to play in ensuring the safety of those participating in physical activity within our sport and for encouraging and motivating participants and activity-providing agencies to assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others.

Recognizing and responding properly to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury, permanent brain damage or even death. Awareness of the signs and symptoms of concussion and knowledge of how to properly manage a concussion is critical to recovery and helping to ensure the individual is not returning to physical activities too soon, risking further complications.

A concussion is a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor. It is critical that someone with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Concussion prevention and management should be positioned within broader injury management strategies that are adopted by organizations that provide sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities in their policies or action plans.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

OCS is committed to ensuring that all its stakeholders, including staff, volunteers and board members:

- Have knowledge on concussion prevention, detection and treatment
- Work, volunteer and manage an environment which minimized the risk of concussion
- Shares concussion information with its partners

5. PROCEDURES/PROVISIONS

The OCS has adopted the following guidelines from the Play Safe Initiative, available on their website at: <http://www.playsafeinitiative.ca/>

In order to better prevent the occurrence of concussions and manage the trauma if and when it occurs, organizations that provide sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities should:

1. Be ready for an emergency

Create, communicate and practice an emergency medical plan. These plans often include contact information for local emergency medical responders and the location of trauma centres, if available.

Identify appropriately trained health care professional(s) for matches and training sessions to help assess and manage concussion and other injuries.

2. Ensure safety during activity

Although these measures may not particularly apply in general to our sport, they should be kept in mind during participation in all activities:

Recognize that an athlete may need to be assessed for limited activities during practices and matches after a concussive incidence, in particular for younger participants.

Modify rules to limit the use of certain practice drills or techniques to help reduce the risk of injury.

Check equipment often. Make sure equipment fits well, is in good condition, is stored properly, and is replaced according to manufacturers' instructions.

3. Build the science

Collect and analyze data from the number of concussions reported by participants during the calendar competitive season.

Study or evaluate changes in concussion knowledge, awareness and action among coaches, parents and participants before and after policies are instituted or changed.

4. Focus on education

Post information for all participants in sport and recreation facilities and/or have information pamphlets on site should the information be required. Posted information may include concussion signs and symptoms, as well as what to do if concussion occurs.

The organization may choose to host or mandate education sessions and invite participants, parents, coaches, officials and healthcare professionals.

5. Manage return to sport

Should a participant suffer a concussion, the organization would be wise to insist upon medical clearance before such participant returns to reengaging in their sport and/or any physical activities. This restriction should be assessed on an "as needed" and individual basis.

In addition, the OCS recommends to its affiliated sport organizations to reference the recommendations of the Canadian Concussion Collaborative (CCC) for policy development regarding sport-related concussion prevention and management in Canada as posted on their website at: <http://casem-acmse.org/education/ccc/>