



## Rhythmic Gymnastics Alberta

### CONCUSSION POLICY

#### PURPOSE

1. Rhythmic Gymnastics Alberta (RGA) is committed to maintaining the health of its athletes and believes that an athlete's health is more important than participating in the sport of Rhythmic Gymnastics. RGA recognizes the increased awareness of concussions and their long-term effects and Rhythmic Gymnastics Alberta therefore enacts this Policy as a tool to help manage concussed and possibly-concussed athletes and preserve the health of its members.

#### SCOPE

2. This Policy applies to all RGA athletes, coaches, officials, and members.

#### PROCEDURE

3. During all events, competitions, and practices sanctioned by Rhythmic Gymnastics Alberta, participants (which include coaches, athletes, officials, and other members) will use their best efforts to:
  - a) Be aware of incidents that may cause a concussion, such as:
    - i. Falls
    - ii. Accidents
    - iii. Collisions
    - iv. Head trauma
  - b) Identify athletes or other individuals who have been involved in any of the above incidents and evaluate them for RED FLAGS, SIGNS, SYMPTOMS and MEMORY based on the Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT5<sup>®</sup>, Concussion in Sport Group 2017). In the event of a suspected concussion, first look for the presence of RED FLAGS, which would indicate that an ambulance should be called immediately.

#### RED FLAGS (Call an ambulance):

- i. Neck pain or tenderness
- ii. Double vision
- iii. Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs
- iv. Severe or increasing headache
- v. Seizure or convulsion
- vi. Loss of consciousness
- vii. Deteriorating conscious state
- viii. Vomiting
- ix. Increasingly restless, agitated or combative

- c) If RED FLAGS are not present, assess for observable SIGNS and SYMPTOMS of concussion, and perform a MEMORY ASSESSMENT:

OBSERVABLE SIGNS (Indicate possible concussion)

- i. Lying motionless on the playing surface
- ii. Slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head
- iii. Disorientation or confusion, or an inability to respond appropriately to questions
- iv. Blank or vacant look
- v. Balance, gait difficulties, motor incoordination, stumbling, slow labored movements
- vi. Facial injury after head trauma

SYMPTOMS

- i. Headache/Pressure in head
- ii. Nausea
- iii. Drowsiness/fatigue/low energy
- iv. Dizziness
- v. Sadness/irritability/anxiety
- vi. Poor concentration
- vii. Poor memory
- viii. Sensitivity to light or noise

MEMORY ASSESSMENT (Athletes over 12)

- i. What venue are we at today?
- ii. What race is happening right now?
- iii. Who was leading the race?
- iv. Where was your last race?
- v. Who won your last race?

4. Athletes or other individuals who have been involved in an incident that may cause a concussion and who may exhibit SIGNS and SYMPTOMS of a concussion or fail to correctly answer the MEMORY ASSESSMENT questions shall be identified and REMOVED from the rhythmic gymnastics activity.
5. Following the athlete being removed from the rhythmic gymnastics activity, the athlete's coach or other individual in charge of the athlete (if the athlete is a minor) or someone familiar to the athlete should:
  - a) Call an emergency number (if the situation appears serious or there are RED FLAGS)
  - b) Notify the athlete's parent (if the athlete is a minor) or someone close to the athlete (if the athlete is not a minor)
  - c) Have a ride home for the athlete arranged
  - d) Reduce external stimulus (noise, other people, etc)
  - e) Remain with the athlete until he or she can be taken home
  - f) Advise the athlete to avoid alcohol, prescription or recreational drugs
  - g) Advise the consultation of a physician

## **RETURN TO Rhythmic Gymnastics**

6. Once the athlete's immediate needs have been met, the athlete's family or the athlete should be directed to the following:
  - a) An athlete who has been concussed should, in consultation with a physician, follow a progressive return-to-school/work strategy and the return-to-rhythmic gymnastics strategy as described in the RGA Concussion Facts and Protocols document.

## **MEDICAL CLEARANCE**

7. This Policy requires the athlete to consult with a physician throughout this process and RGA will comply with all directions provided by the physician which may supersede this policy.

