



HEALTH AWARENESS

How To Recognize And Manage Concussions

(NAPSA)—As various sports seasons kick into high gear at high schools across the country, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working to raise awareness about concussion through a new multimedia educational tool kit entitled, “Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports.” More than 300,000 sports-and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries occur in the United States each year.

Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a blow or jolt to the head, which range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Concussions can happen to boys or girls in any sport. The risks increase in athletic activities where collisions between players are common.

Although concussions are often lightheartedly described as “dings” or having one’s “bell rung,” even the mildest concussion can be serious. A lack of awareness about the effect of concussions may result in allowing an athlete to return to play too soon following initial injury, placing the athlete at risk of a more serious, potentially fatal condition.

The “Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports” tool kit contains practical, easy-to-use information for coaches, athletic directors, trainers, teens and parents, including:

- A video and DVD featuring a high school athlete disabled by concussion;



Coaches play a key role in preventing concussions and managing them correctly.

- A coach’s guide with information about preventing and managing concussion;
- A wallet card and clipboard sticker for coaches;
- Posters targeting athletes;
- Fact sheets in English and Spanish for parents and athletes;
- A CD-ROM with downloadable kit materials and other concussion-related resources.

Athletes showing signs or symptoms of concussion should be kept from play until appropriate medical personnel have evaluated their injury and given them permission to return to play. The key message to athletes in the tool kit is, “it’s better to miss one game than the whole season.”

The “Heads Up” kit can be ordered or downloaded free from www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm.