



Ocean Grove Cobras Junior Football Club

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

March 2025

PURPOSE & COMMITMENT

The Ocean Grove Cobras Junior Football Club holds safety of our players as our highest priority. The purpose of this policy is to ensure appropriate action is taken following a head knock or suspected concussion, in accordance with the AFL Community Concussion Guidelines – ensuring our club provides a safe football experience for our players.

The AFL Community Concussion Guidelines can be found here:

[The Management of Sport-Related Concussion in Australian Football](#)

PROTOCOL

Australian rules football community competitions at all ages have adopted a mandatory minimum 21-day return to play protocol.

Under the AFL's community guidelines, **the earliest a player can return to play after a concussion is on the 21st day after the day on which the concussion was sustained** and provided that the player has safely progressed through each phase of the return-to-play program.

Practically, the guidance on how this will be managed by OGCJFC will be as follows:

- Any player who has received (or suspected to have received) a head knock during game day or training will be assessed by a first aider.
- The first aider will assess the player for any visual signs or symptoms indicating suspected concussion. In all cases where concussion is suspected, the player is NOT to return to play in the same match or training session. Whilst first aiders are not qualified to diagnose concussion, there are obvious signs which may require immediate medical assessment. This will be managed accordingly in consultation with parents/guardians. Refer to OGCJFC Medical Policy for further information regarding loss of consciousness.
- Should the player not be considered requiring immediate medical assessment but not considered suitable to return to the game or training, parents/guardians will be advised.
- In all situations where a player is unable to complete the game or training given a suspected concussion, a medical clearance certificate will be required for the player to return to training or game play in accordance with return to play protocols.
- Return to play protocols also applies for concussion diagnoses which may have occurred separately to (or post) football and it is the obligation of parents/guardians to inform OGCJFC.

We acknowledge that these new guidelines may receive some resistance from the player and/or parents/guardians (especially given the potential requirement for medical assessment for uncertainties), however our approach to player safety from a potential head injury is – 'if in doubt, sit them out'.

CONCUSSION OFFICER

The purpose of this role is to provide a single point of contact and to help coordinate matters related to concussion, such as communication of activity restrictions and progress through the graded return to play process. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact our concussion officer with any questions or concerns.

Concussion Officer: Milly Dickinson – Ph. 0421 961 627 – concussion@oceangrovecobras.com.au