



EDMONTON ROWING CLUB

Edmonton Rowing Club (ERC) Concussion Policy and Protocol

Policy Title	Edmonton Rowing Club (ERC) Concussion Policy and Protocol
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Appendix(-ces) to this policy	A – Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport B – Alberta Rowing Association Draft Concussion Policy and Protocol

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Purpose

1. The [Canadian Concussion Collaborative](#) recommends that all sport organizations and sport event organizers implement a concussion management protocol. In support of this, the ERC has adopted this Concussion Policy and Protocol set out in [The Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport](#) and the guidelines of the [Alberta Concussion Alliance](#) (ACA).
2. This document is designed to provide resources and guidance to ERC members, volunteers, coaches, and staff who plan, participate in, operate, or regulate rowing based events that present a risk of concussion to participants. It outlines policies, procedures and programs for the prevention, early recognition, and treatment of sport and recreation related concussions and head injuries.

Application

3. This Policy applies to all ERC members and program participants including but not limited to coaches, officials, athletes, parents, regatta organizers, administrators, volunteers, staff and contractors of the ERC.

Policy Statement

4. The ERC is committed to maintaining the health of the community and believes that participating in the activities organized by the ERC can lead to better health. Our activities, like most physical activities, have an inherent risk of concussion. The ERC recognizes that concussions are a significant public health issue because of their potential short- and long-term consequences. The ERC therefore enacts this policy and related protocols as tools to help prevent, recognize and properly treat concussions which may occur through our activities.
5. The ERC will require all participants follow all treatment, return to school/work, and return to sport protocols.
6. The proper treatment of a concussion is more important than participation in any sport/activity/work/school during the healing process.

Definitions

7. This policy is based on the definition of concussion from the 2016 Berlin Consensus Concussion Statement on concussion in sport:

Sport related concussion (SRC) is a traumatic brain injury induced by biomechanical forces. Several common features that may be utilized in clinically defining the nature of a concussive head injury include:

- SRC may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head.

- SRC typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously. However, in some cases, signs and symptoms evolve over a number of minutes to hours.
 - SRC may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical signs and symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than a structural injury and, as such, no abnormality is seen on standard structural neuroimaging studies.
 - SRC results in a range of clinical signs and symptoms that may or may not involve loss of consciousness. Resolution of the clinical and cognitive features typically follows a sequential course. However, in some cases symptoms may be prolonged.
 - The clinical signs and symptoms cannot be explained by drug, alcohol, or medication use, other injuries (such as cervical injuries, peripheral vestibular dysfunction, etc.) or other comorbidities (e.g., psychological factors or coexisting medical conditions).
8. Suspected Concussion means the recognition that an individual appears to have either experienced an injury or impact that may result in a concussion or is exhibiting unusual behaviour that may be the result of concussion.
9. Concussion Diagnosis means a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. It is critical that an individual with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Stages of Concussion Management

10. Education

The ERC will provide concussion education to every athlete, parent and coach prior to the beginning of each season. Education must include the following topics:

- the definition of concussion,
- possible mechanisms of injury
- common signs and symptoms
- steps that can be taken to prevent concussions and other injuries from occurring in sport
- what to do when an athlete has suffered a suspected concussion or head injury
- what measures should be taken to ensure proper medical assessment including return to school and return to sport strategies, and
- return-to-sport medical clearance requirements.

11. Prevention: Ensuring Safe Sport - Concussion Prevention Strategies

The ERC will ensure that its activities follows the rules of racing, and that the rules are consistently enforced in order to ensure safe participation.

All ERC staff and participants will behave ethically at all times.

ERC will implement sport-specific concussion prevention strategies as outlined by the Alberta Concussion Alliance and found on their [website](#) for all its activities.

12. Head injury/concussion recognition

Although the formal diagnosis of concussion can only be made following a medical assessment, all sport stakeholders including athletes, parents, coaches, and officials are responsible for the recognition and reporting of athletes who demonstrate visual signs of a head injury or who report concussion symptoms.

Stakeholders can use the [Concussion Recognition Tool](#) - 5th Edition (CRT5) to identify potential concussion.

13. Documentation of Incident

The ERC will record the details of the incident and the athlete's progression through the stages of concussion management. Normally the ERC Head Coach will be responsible for completing documentation, in conjunction with the athlete's coach and under the guidance of the ERC Executive.

- Time of injury- record and monitor all signs and symptoms for 48 hours following the injury. Note if signs get worse and if any from the "red flag" symptoms show follow the emergency protocol.
- During recovery- record how much school/work/sport time has been missed. This information is valuable for the athlete if they ever sustain another concussion.
- Return to sport- document that the athlete has received clearance from a medical doctor before returning to sport. In addition, obtain from the athlete documentation that states he/she has successfully returned to school/work full time without reoccurring symptoms as well as successfully exercised to exhaustion without reoccurring symptoms.

14. [Return to School](#)

This stepwise program starts with cognitive and physical rest. Follow each step through completion. If symptoms are severe at any step, stop and wait until the symptoms resolve and continue as tolerated. Physical activity during return to school is restricted to walking as tolerated.

15. [Return to Sport](#)

Return to school/work must be fully completed and the athlete must be in their full-time school or work environment without physical activity before starting the return to sport phase. After completing a step, wait 24 hours before moving to the next step. The athlete must be asymptomatic throughout this process. If symptoms do come back, wait 24 hours after symptoms have subsided and when returning, start at the step previous. This should be medically guided.

Questions

Questions about this policy should be directed to the [ERC Safety Director](#).

Appendix A

Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport, Parachute (2017)

Appendix B

Alberta Rowing Association Concussion Policy and Protocol (Draft), 2016

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