

## ON THE FIELD MANAGEMENT

The care of an athlete who suffers a concussion starts before the athlete ever steps on the field. While the return to play and emergency care of the athlete have been reviewed many times, it is what is “behind the scenes” that is completed prior to practice or games that can make the difference.

### WHAT YOU DO BEFOREHAND CAN BE ADDRESSED IN FOUR PARTS:

Every field, gym, court, etc. should have an emergency plan in place. As you walk your kids to the practice field, ask yourself these questions, “What if someone sustained a serious injury?” Every coach, parent and volunteer should be familiar with the facility’s emergency plan or at least know whom to go to in case of an emergency.

Is there a plan in place for someone to call 911? Can that person give accurate directions to the field? Do you have cell phone reception? Twenty years ago, we always carried a quarter for the payphone. Now, everyone has a cell phone, but not everyone has cell phone reception everywhere. Make sure you have “enough bars” on your phone. If you don’t, identify someone who does.

Is the field accessible for emergency personnel? Most fields have a fence around them for security reasons. Think to

yourself, “If the emergency squad had to get to the field, is there access?” If the gates are locked, then the coaches should have or know who has the keys. Many youth soccer complexes have numerous fields. A parent or coach should meet the ambulance once it enters the complex to direct them to the correct field. This will save valuable time and resources.

Who is in charge? How many times have we seen a youth game and someone gets hurt and needs medical attention, but no one really knows what to do. Every coach and/or volunteer prior to the season should identify the one person who will be “in charge” or know what to do in the emergency situation.

If you complete these simple steps before your child or athlete ever crosses the line onto the field or court, valuable time will be saved. Time, in some emergency situations, is the most important thing when it comes to caring for an athlete’s concussion.

For more information about the OhioHealth Sports Medicine Concussion Management Program, or to find a sports medicine physician near you, please call (614) 4-HEALTH or visit [www.GetInTheGameOhio.com](http://www.GetInTheGameOhio.com).

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