



Barrie Trojan Swim Club (BTSC)

Return to Sport Policy

Date Effective: July 8, 2019
Date Last Reviewed: 2017 (Formerly Return to Play Policy)
Date Last Revised: 2017

SCOPE:

This policy applies to members, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and staff of the Barrie Trojan Swim Club (BTSC) and provides guidance on the management of swimmer injuries and the return to sport. This policy outlines the required steps in the management of sport-related injuries with additional emphasis on concussion management.

POLICY STATEMENT:

There is a risk of injury for those who train, exercise and participate in sports, including swimming. Injuries, whether in the form of minor sprain/strain, or acute traumatic injury may require restriction of and/or change in a swimmer's training and competition program. The health of BTSC members is paramount and the BTSC strives to foster the safe, timely, and appropriate return to sport in the event of injury.

DEFINITIONS:

Child Sport Concussion Assessment Tool, 5th Edition (Child SCAT5): A standardized tool for evaluating concussions in individuals aged five to twelve years, designed for use by physicians and licensed healthcare professionals.

Concussion diagnosis: Among licensed healthcare professionals, only medical doctors and nurse practitioners are qualified to conduct a comprehensive medical assessment and provide a concussion diagnosis in Canada.

Concussion Recognition Tool, 5th Edition (CRT5): A tool intended to be used for the identification of suspected concussion in children, youth, and adults.

Licensed healthcare professional: A healthcare provider who is licensed by a national professional regulatory body to provide healthcare services that fall within their licensed scope of practice. Examples include medical doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists and massage therapists.

Return-to-Sport Strategy: A graduated stepwise strategy for the process of recovery and return to sport participation. The broader process of returning to unstructured and structured physical activity has commonly been referred to as “return to play”.

Sport Concussion Assessment Tool, 5th Edition (SCAT5): A standardized tool for evaluating concussions in individuals aged thirteen years or older, designed for use by physicians and licensed healthcare professionals.

Sport Related Concussion (SRC): A form of traumatic brain injury induced by biomechanical forces with the following defining features:

- caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head
- 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
- acute clinical signs and symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than a structural injury
- 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

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The amount of time away from training/competition after injury varies according to situational factors, and the type/severity of the injury.

The diagnosis of and prescription of treatment for injuries is strictly a medical matter. Under no circumstances shall this be considered within the jurisdiction of BTSC coaches.

BTSC coaches, with City of Barrie/Innisfil lifeguard staff, are responsible to oversee the provision of prompt on-deck management of suspected injuries and to raise awareness as applicable with the swimmer's parents/legal guardian.

In the management of injuries, BTSC coaches shall work with athletes and medical practitioners to carry out instructions for safe return to sport. No swimmer shall be allowed to practice or swim in a competition if he/she is suffering from an injury if it is contrary to the instructions provided by the medical practitioner.

If a swimmer is withheld from participation in practice or competition for reasons related but not limited to injury, fatigue and/or soreness, the swimmer's parent/legal guardian shall be informed.

Although the formal diagnosis of concussions is made following a medical assessment by a qualified physician or nurse practitioner, all sport stakeholders including athletes, parents, coaches, officials, and trainers are responsible for the recognition and reporting of BTSC members who demonstrate the visual signs of a head injury, or who report concussion symptoms.

A concussion should be suspected in any athlete who sustains a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body and demonstrates any of the visual signs of a suspected concussion or reports any symptoms of a suspected concussion (Refer to Appendix I, *Concussion Recognition Tool 5*). A concussion should also be suspected if an athlete reports any concussion symptoms to peers, parents, or BTSC staff or if anyone witnesses an athlete exhibiting any of the visual signs of concussion.

Review and acknowledgment of this policy shall be provided annually (Refer to Appendix II: *Pre-season Education Sheet*) to BTSC members, parents, volunteers and staff and shall include:

1. The definition of concussion
2. Possible mechanisms of injury
3. Common signs and symptoms
4. Steps to prevent concussions and other injuries from occurring in sport
5. What to do when an athlete has suffered a suspected concussion or head injury
6. Required measures to ensure proper medical assessment including return to sport strategies
7. Medical clearance requirements

PROCEDURE:

In the event of any accident or injury sustained during BTSC training or competition:

1. The swimmer's coach shall be notified and the swimmer will be removed from the water as appropriate.
2. In conjunction with the City of Barrie/Innisfil Lifeguarding staff, the BTSC coach shall:
 - (a) Assess the nature and severity of the injury
 - (b) Make a decision regarding the swimmer seeking emergency medical attention, sending the swimmer home, or returning the swimmer to practice
3. In the event that the swimmer needs to be sent home, the coach shall contact the parents/guardian of the swimmer and arrange for transfer home. It is the responsibility of the coach to supervise the swimmer until the parent/guardian arrives.

4. In the event that emergency medical attention is required, the BTSC coach shall immediately contact the parents/legal guardian of the swimmer.
5. The BTSC is not responsible for any costs associated with tending to the health and care of swimmers.
6. It is the responsibility of the BTSC coach to complete any City of Barrie/Innisfil emergency response notification and documentation as applicable.
7. If the severity of an injury warrants oversight by a medical professional, return to swimming post-injury shall be managed by the instruction of the medical professional and communicated to BTSC coaching staff by the athlete or parents/guardians.
8. Return to sport post injury shall be graduated and individualized to the swimmer's needs, in compliance with the *Return to Sport Strategy Graduated Approach* (Refer to Appendix III).
9. Communication shall occur as appropriate between BTSC members/parents or legal guardians/medical professionals and BTSC coaching staff.

In the event of an SRC or suspected SRC:

1. BTSC coaches, officials, City of Barrie/Innisfil Lifeguard staff or healthcare providers shall immediately remove a swimmer from the pool or any BTSC related activity if the swimmer exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviour consistent with a concussion.
2. If a licensed healthcare professional is present, the athlete shall be taken to a quiet area and undergo Sideline Medical Assessment using the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 5 (SCAT5) or the Child SCAT5. These assessments shall **not** be conducted by BTSC coaching staff.
3. If there is no licensed healthcare professional present, the swimmer's parents/legal guardian shall be notified immediately, and the athlete shall be referred immediately to a medical doctor or nurse practitioner for assessment.
4. If an athlete demonstrates any of the 'Red Flags' indicated by the *Concussion Recognition Tool 5*, a more severe head or spine injury should be suspected and emergency medical assessment shall be pursued immediately by calling 911.
5. A swimmer who has been removed from practice or competition, or has a suspected concussion may not participate in any athletic activity with the BTSC until they are evaluated by a medical professional (refer to Appendix IV: *Medical Assessment Letter*) and receives written clearance to resume activities.
6. Prior to returning to full training or competition, BTSC members diagnosed with a concussion must provide their coach with a standardized *Medical Clearance Letter* (refer to Appendix V) which specifies that a medical doctor or nurse practitioner has personally evaluated the swimmer and has cleared the athlete to return to sport.

7. Return to sport post injury shall be graduated and individualized to the swimmer's needs, in compliance with the *Return to Sport Strategy Graduated Approach* (Refer to Appendix III).

REFERENCES:

McCrory P, Meeuwisse W, Dvorak J, *et al.* (2017). Consensus statement on concussion in sport—the 5th international conference on concussion in sport. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*;51:838-847.

Parachute (2017). Canadian Guidelines on Concussion in Sport. Retrieved June 2019 from: http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/injurytopics/Canadian_Guideline_on_Concussion_in_Sport-Parachute.pdf

Appendix I: Concussion Recognition Tool

<http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/resources/CRT5.pdf>

Appendix II: Pre-season Education Sheet:

http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/injurytopics/PreSeason-Education-Sheet_Parachute.pdf

Appendix III: Return to Sport Strategy

<http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/resources/Concussion-ReturnToSport.pdf>

Appendix IV: Medical Assessment Letter

http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/injurytopics/Medical-Assessment-Letter_Parachute.pdf

Appendix V: Medical Clearance Letter

http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/injurytopics/Medical-Clearance-Letter_Parachute.pdf