



CONCUSSION POLICY AND PROTOCOL*

ONTARIO VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION (“OVA”)

*** This Policy does not constitute any medical advice and does not contain any medical diagnoses, symptom assessments or medical opinions.**

Preamble

1. Whereas the education and awareness of concussions is an important part of providing a safe sporting environment; and whereas the OVA is committed to taking all reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure sporting environment for participants in its programs, activities and events; and
2. Whereas this Policy is one of several tools that OVA will use to fulfill its commitment to provide a safe sporting environment and to protect its members from harm; and
3. Whereas nothing in this Policy shall be construed as abrogating the OVA’s right, responsibility, power and discretion to take any and all necessary steps to ensure a safe sporting environment for its members.

Purpose

4. The purpose of this Policy is to contribute to a safe sporting environment through education and by promoting awareness of concussion diagnosis and graduated return to play of players who have suffered a concussion.

Definition

5. Individual – All categories of membership as defined in Section 2.1 of the Ontario Volleyball Association constitution and by-laws including but not limited to, clubs, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, directors and officers of the OVA, and parent/guardians of the athletes.
6. Concussion Awareness Resource – a concussion awareness resource prepared and reviewed annually by the Ministry or a Ministry recognized organization providing guidelines on concussion in sport. This resource provides information about concussions and the OVA will require signed acknowledgment by all Individuals the information has been reviewed.
7. **Designated Person – an Individual that has completed the Concussion Awareness Resources within the last twelve months and is required to remove athletes from field of play when a concussion is suspected. Also required to receive confirmation from the parent/guardian of medical clearance from a physician or nurse practitioner before the athlete is permitted to return to unrestricted training, practice or competition.**

8. A concussion:
 - a. Is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);
 - b. May be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;
 - c. Can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (In fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness); and,
 - d. Cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs.
9. **Suspected Concussion – 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 a concussion.**

Definitions cited from, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Concussion Guideline.

Concussion Awareness and Education

10. The OVA is committed to the long term health of our athletes. Current and credible concussion resources will be accessible to all athletes, coaches, parents and stakeholders. The resources will include information on concussion prevention, identification, management and treatment. A link to the [Ministry's Concussion Program webpage](#), is available on the OVA website.
11. Volleyball Canada added the Coaches Association of Canada's 90 minute free online module "Making Head Way" to its coach certification pathway. For any volleyball coach to receive "Certified" status at any National Coach Certification Program (NCCP) level "Making Head Way" is mandatory. The online module can be found here: <http://www.coach.ca/-p153487>.
12. **The OVA requires all coaches and club technical directors to meet the OVA Coach Eligibility Policy, prior to their registration as an OVA member, which mandates the Coaches Association of Canada 90 minute free online module "Making Head Way".**
13. All Learning Facilitators that deliver the Grassroots Programming will have completed Coaches Association of Canada's 90 minute free online module "Making Head Way".
14. As required by Rowan's Law, to complete OVA registration, all Individuals must sign Concussion Code of Conduct and Review of Concussion Awareness Acknowledgement Form, (See Appendix A for forms), acknowledging they have reviewed the Ministry approved concussion awareness resources and agree to follow the code of conduct for concussions.

Club Requirements

15. Each club must have an administrator responsible for recording all concussion-related incidences. Each club team must have a Designated Person onsite for all events, competitions, practices.
16. If a concussion is suspected, the Designated Person is required to:
 - a. Remove the athlete - Immediately remove the athlete from further training, practice or competition.
 - b. Call 911 if Emergency - Call 9-1-1, if in their opinion, doing so is necessary.
 - c. Inform - If the athlete is under 18, inform the parent/guardian about the removal. Advise the athlete or parent/guardian that the athlete is required to undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner before returning.
 - d. Provide Protocols – Provide the athlete or if the athlete is under 18, the athlete’s parent/guardian with Removal-from and Return-to-Sport protocols. See Volleyball Canada Concussion Protocol.
 - e. Record the Incident – Provide appropriate details to club administrator responsible for the record of any incidences of an athlete’s removal, related to concussions.
 - f. Confirm Return – Confirm the athlete suspected of a concussion has undergone a medical assessment and has not been diagnosed as having a concussion. Ensure the athlete only returns to training, practice or competition once medically cleared to do so.
17. If a concussion is confirmed, the Designated Person is required to:
 - a. Receive Medical Advice – Receive from the athlete or parent/guardian the medical advice or recommendations provided to them by the physician or nurse practitioner.
 - b. Disclosing Diagnosis – Inform the athlete or parent/guardian of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sport organization with which the athlete is registered or school that the athlete attends.
 - c. Record Progression – Provide to club administrator record of the athlete’s progression through the graduated return-to-sports steps until the athlete or parent/guardian confirm medical clearance.
 - d. Medical Clearance – Receive confirmation from athlete or parent/guardian of medical clearance by physician or nurse practitioner before the athlete is permitted to move on to unrestricted training, practice or competition.

Event and Program Protocol

18. For the safety of the competitors and spectators at OVA events, warnings for all to be aware of their surroundings and to keep their heads up will be posted. See sample poster (Appendix B), “Heads Up” posters, along with recommended warm-up protocols at venues.
19. The OVA follows the Volleyball Canada Concussion Policy and Protocol, see Appendix C, for the following events:

- a. Indoor Ontario Championships
- b. Indoor Grand Prix events
- c. Beach Ontario Championships
- d. OVA Beach Tour Grand Slam events
- e. OVA hosted National Championships
- f. Team Ontario Programs, including Athlete Development Camps
- g. Regional Team Programming.

Medical Assessment

20. The OVA asserts it is critical that any athlete, coach, official, parent, and stakeholder that has concussion signs and symptoms stop all activity immediately and be assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Graduated Return to Play

21. The OVA recommends that a graduated return to learn and play protocol is followed for athletes diagnosed with a concussion. There should be no return to play until the athlete has been medically cleared and has successfully returned to school / learning, if applicable, without worsening of symptoms.
22. When returning to play once medically cleared, a stepwise supervised program should be followed with stages of progression. An example of return to play stages can be found in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Concussion Guidelines [Ministry's Concussion Program webpage](#). See progression for return to play Appendix D.
23. The OVA will provide current and credible return to learn and return to play resources on its website.

Review and Approval

24. This policy was approved by the Board of Directors of OVA, **January 2022**.
25. This policy is effective as at **January 2022**.

Appendix A

Ontario Volleyball Association

Concussion Code of Conduct for Athletes and Parents/Guardians (for athletes under 18 year of age)

I will help prevent concussions by:

- Wearing the proper equipment for my sport and wearing it correctly.
- Developing my skills and strength so that I can participate to the best of my ability.
- Respecting the rules of my sport or activity.
- Respecting the warm-up hitting protocol during all competition and training sessions.
- Committing to fair play and respect for all (respecting other athletes, coaches, team trainers and officials).

I will care for my health and safety by taking concussions seriously, and I understand that:

- A concussion is a brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- A blow to my head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes the brain to move around inside the skull may cause a concussion.
- I don't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion (Meaning: If I think I might have a concussion I should stop participating in further training, practice or competition **immediately**, or tell an adult if I think another athlete has a concussion).
- Continuing to participate in further training, practice or competition with a possible concussion increases my risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms, and increases my risk of other injuries.

I will not hide concussion symptoms. I will speak up for myself and others.

- I will not hide my symptoms. I will tell a coach, official, team trainer, parent or another adult I trust if I experience **any** symptoms of concussion.



- If someone else tells me about concussion symptoms, or I see signs they might have a concussion, I will tell a coach, official, team trainer, parent or another adult I trust so they can help.
- I understand that if I have a suspected concussion, I will be removed from sport and that I will not be able to return to training, practice or competition until I undergo a medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition.
- I have a commitment to sharing any pertinent information regarding incidents of removal from sport with the athlete's school and any other sport organization with which the athlete has registered (Meaning: If I am diagnosed with a concussion, I understand that letting all of my other coaches and teachers know about my injury will help them support me while I recover).

I will take the time I need to recover, because it is important for my health.

- I understand my commitment to supporting the return-to-sport process and I will follow Ontario Volleyball Association's Return-to-Sport Protocol.
- I understand I will have to be medically cleared by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to training, practice or competition.
- I will respect my coaches, team trainers, parents, health-care professionals, and medical doctors and nurse practitioners, regarding my health and safety.

In addition to the commitment to the OVA Concussion Code of Conduct, Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 states that prior to registration with any sport organization all individuals must review the applicable concussion awareness resources found at Ontario.ca/concussions.

The below links can also be used to access these materials:

[Ages 10 and Under](#)

[Ages 11-14](#)

[Ages 15 and Up](#)

You must review one of the resources once a year, and then confirm that you have completed the review every time you register with a sport organization.

Once you have reviewed these materials please provide a signed copy of the below *Concussion Code of Conduct and Review of Concussion Awareness Resource Acknowledgement Form* to your Club.

Note: this form must be completed prior to your/your child's registration with the OVA.



Concussion Code of Conduct and Review of Concussion Awareness Resource Acknowledgement Form

Under Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018, every sport organization will ask you to confirm that you reviewed one of the Concussion Awareness Resources in this website (Ontario.ca/concussions) before you can register/participate in a sport.

You must review one of the resources once a year, and then confirm that you have completed the review every time you register with a sport organization.

Sport organizations must also establish a Concussion Code of Conduct and individuals must confirm that they have reviewed the sport organization's applicable Concussion Code of Conduct prior to registration/participation in a sport.

By signing here, I confirm that I have reviewed the applicable Concussion Awareness Resource at Ontario.ca/concussions and that I have fully reviewed and commit to the Ontario Volleyball Association's applicable Concussion Code of Conduct.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (for individuals under 18 yrs of age) _____

Date: _____

Ontario Volleyball Association

Concussion Code of Conduct for Coaches and Team Trainers

I can help prevent concussions through my:

- Efforts to ensure that my athletes wear the proper equipment and wear it correctly.
- Efforts to help my athletes develop their skills and strength so they can participate to the best of their abilities.
- Respect for the rules of my sport or activity and efforts to ensure that my athletes do too.
- Respect for adhering to the warm-up hitting protocol during all competition and training sessions.
- Commitment to fair play and respect for all (respecting other coaches, team trainers, officials and all participants and ensuring my athletes respect others and play fair).

I will care for the health and safety of all participants by taking concussions seriously. I understand that:

- A concussion is a brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- A blow to the head, face, or neck, or a blow to the body may cause the brain to move around inside the skull and result in a concussion.
- A person doesn't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- An athlete with a suspected concussion **must** stop participating in training, practice or competition **immediately**.
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion.
- Continuing to participate in further training, practice or competition with a suspected concussion increases a person's risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms, and increases their risk of other injuries or even death.

I will create an environment where participants feel safe and comfortable speaking up. I will:

- Encourage athletes not to hide their symptoms, but to tell me, an official, parent or another adult they trust if they experience **any** symptoms of concussion after an impact.



- Lead by example. I will tell a fellow coach, official, team trainer and seek medical attention by a physician or nurse practitioner if I am experiencing any concussion symptoms.
- Understand and respect that any athlete with a suspected concussion must be removed from sport and not permitted to return until they undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition.
- *For coaches only:* Commit to providing opportunities before and after each training, practice and competition to enable athletes to discuss potential issues related to concussions.

I will support all participants to take the time they need to recover.

- I understand my commitment to supporting the return-to-sport process.
- I understand the athletes will have to be cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner before returning to sport.
- I will respect my fellow coaches, team trainers, parents, physicians and nurse practitioners and any decisions made with regards to the health and safety of my athletes.

In addition to the commitment to the OVA Concussion Code of Conduct, Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 states that prior to registration with any sport organization all individuals must review the applicable concussion awareness resources found at Ontario.ca/concussions.

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Once you have reviewed these materials please provide a signed copy of the below *Concussion Code of Conduct and Review of Concussion Awareness Resource Acknowledgement Form* to your Club.

Note: this form must be completed prior to your registration with the OVA



Concussion Code of Conduct and Review of Concussion Awareness Resource Acknowledgement Form

Under Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018, every sport organization will ask you to confirm that you reviewed one of the Concussion Awareness Resources in this website (Ontario.ca/concussions) before you can register/participate in a sport.

You must review one of the resources once a year, and then confirm that you have completed the review every time you register with a sport organization.

Sport organizations must also establish a Concussion Code of Conduct and individuals must confirm that they have reviewed the sport organization's applicable Concussion Code of Conduct prior to registration/participation in a sport.

By signing here, I confirm that I have reviewed the applicable Concussion Awareness Resource at Ontario.ca/concussions and that I have fully reviewed and commit to the Ontario Volleyball Association's applicable Concussion Code of Conduct.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (for individuals under 18 yrs of age) _____

Date: _____

Ontario Volleyball Association

Concussion Code of Conduct for Referees

I can help prevent concussions through my:

- Efforts to ensure that athletes wear the proper equipment and wear it correctly.
- Respect for the rules of the sport or activity and efforts to ensure that all coaches and athletes adhere to those rules.
- Enforcement of the warm-up hitting protocol during all competition and training sessions.
- Commitment to fair play and respect for all (respecting athletes, coaches, team trainers, other referees and any other participants).

I will care for the health and safety of all participants by taking concussions seriously. I understand that:

- A concussion is a brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- A blow to the head, face, or neck, or a blow to the body may cause the brain to move around inside the skull and result in a concussion.
- A person doesn't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- Any participant with a suspected concussion should stop participating in training, practice or competition **immediately**.
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion.
- Continuing to participate in any competition or sporting activity with a suspected concussion increases a person's risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms, and increases their risk of other injuries or even death.

I will create an environment where participants feel safe and comfortable speaking up. I will:

- Encourage participants not to hide their symptoms, but to tell me, a coach, parent or another adult they trust if they experience **any** symptoms of concussion after an impact.
- Lead by example. I will tell a fellow referee, coach, team trainer and seek medical attention by a physician or nurse practitioner if I am experiencing any concussion symptoms.



- Understand and respect that any athlete with a suspected concussion must be removed from sport and not permitted to return until they undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition.

I will support all participants to take the time they need to recover.

- I understand my commitment to supporting the return-to-sport process.
- I understand that participants will have to be cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner before returning to sport.
- I will respect my fellow referees, coaches, team trainers, parents, physicians and nurse practitioners and any decisions made with regards to the health and safety of participants.

In addition to the commitment to the OVA Concussion Code of Conduct, Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 states that prior to registration with any sport organization all individuals must review the applicable concussion awareness resources found at Ontario.ca/concussions.

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You must review one of the resources once a year, and then confirm that you have completed the review every time you register with a sport organization.

Sport organizations must also establish a Concussion Code of Conduct and individuals must confirm that they have reviewed the sport organization's applicable Concussion Code of Conduct prior to registration/participation in a sport.

By signing here, I confirm that I have reviewed the applicable Concussion Awareness Resource at Ontario.ca/concussions and that I have fully reviewed and commit to the Ontario Volleyball Association's applicable Concussion Code of Conduct.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (for individuals under 18 yrs of age) _____

Date: _____