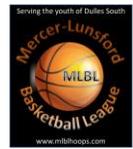


# Mercer-Lunsford Basketball League

25050 Riding Plaza  
Suite 130, Box 137  
South Riding, VA 20152  
Website: [www.mblhoops.com](http://www.mblhoops.com)



## Mercer-Lunsford Basketball League Concussion Policy

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Mercer-Lunsford Basketball League (MLBL) concussion policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for parents, coaches, and administrators involved in MLBL activities when dealing with head injuries and concussions to help protect the health and safety of our players. All parents, coaches, and administrators involved in MLBL activities shall be informed of and be expected to follow this policy.

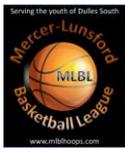
### 2. Definition and Awareness

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that may be caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly. The sudden movement of the head may result in a disruption of the brain's normal function, and the player may display a wide range of signs or symptoms, including but not limited to: dizziness, a feeling of "fogginess," loss of balance or coordination, loss of memory, confusion, altered vision, headache, nausea, or emotional disturbance, among others. On rare occasions loss of consciousness may occur, but this sign does not need to be present in order for a concussion to have occurred. Signs and symptoms may be immediately apparent, or may be subtle and not present for hours or even days. Concussions are very common in all sports involving physical activity, including basketball, and concussions occur commonly in both boys and girls. The effects of a concussion may be mild or severe, short lived or chronic, and every athlete responds differently to different episodes. It is clear that a concussion is a potentially serious injury with potentially serious effects. Therefore, it is critical that every effort is made to recognize and handle these incidents appropriately, and more importantly, to prevent these incidents from happening in the first place.

### 3. Recognition and Response

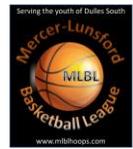
Any parent, coach, or MLBL administrator shall have the freedom to express concern for, or suspicion of, a concussion. If any coach, parent, or MLBL administrator reasonably suspects an athlete has experienced a concussion or significant head trauma, they are encouraged to promptly communicate this concern to another appropriate party, most likely another adult present at the sporting event, and most certainly the parents of the player, if accessible. In such an instance, we recommend that these persons exercise caution and remove the athlete from play immediately, and keep the athlete out of play for the remainder of the activity, whether a practice or game. However, specific diagnosis and management decisions must not be made by players, parents, coaches or administrators. **Parents of any athlete suspected of suffering a concussion should have the athlete evaluated by a health care professional experienced in concussion diagnosis and management.** Return to play decisions must be managed by this professional and the athlete's parents, and not a coach or administrator. For the purposes of this policy, a professional who may manage a player who has sustained a head injury means:

- a) A duly licensed physician;
- b) A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
- c) A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or
- d) A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the athlete's recovery.



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## 4. Coach's procedures for handling suspected concussions

1. Immediately remove the player from the practice or game and ensure that they are continuously monitored until the parent/guardian arrives and takes over care
2. Immediately contact the parent and advise them of the circumstances surrounding the incident and encourage the parent to seek the advice of a health care professional
3. After the conclusion of the practice/game (***not longer than 24 hours***) send an email to your division commissioner and copy [info@mlblhoops.com](mailto:info@mlblhoops.com) with the subject line "CONCUSSION"
4. A MLBL board member will follow up directly with the parents on all reported concussions. Players will not be cleared to participate in subsequent practices or games until follow-up from the league has occurred.

## 5. Find a health care professional

As noted above, in the event an athlete suffers an injury to the head we encourage parents or legal guardians of our participants to consult with their family doctor or otherwise seek proper medical attention. Coaches, parents or other spectators should not pressure an athlete to return to play. If an athlete is known by the coach to have suffered from a concussion, the coach should not allow such athlete to return to play without direction or approval from the athlete's parent(s) or legal guardian.

## 6. Prevention

The most effective approach to concussions is prevention of these episodes from occurring in the first place. Basketball is a fast and at times highly physical activity, which may lead to risk of head injury. All MLBL coaches are encouraged to take reasonable steps to minimize the risk of head injuries.

Suggestions include:

- Minimize drills or language that are primarily designed to promote "toughness," but which may instead lead to increased risk of head injury; specifically, drills or language in which players are encouraged to dive on the floor, or increase physical contact.
- Encourage players to avoid "hard" or intentional fouls that may put other players in danger.
- Minimize emphasis on drawing charges, which can lead to players colliding and hitting their heads on the floor. If a charge is to be drawn, encourage the player to brace his or her neck to avoid the head hitting the floor.
- Minimize horsing around at practices or intermissions during games; half-court or other shots that are well beyond a player's reasonable range can endanger persons standing near the basket.
- Consider the use of mouth guards.

## 7. Conclusion

While it may be impossible to completely eliminate concussions, it is possible to significantly reduce the risk and severity of these injuries. Reducing the risk of concussions requires a continuum of techniques and efforts on the part of all parties involved in athletic activities, and we encourage all participants, parents and coaches to familiarize themselves with these safeguards.

## 8. Mandatory Online Training Course for Coaches:

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html)

Coaches and assistant coaches must complete the free online course, and send a copy of their completion certificate to their division coordinator prior to their first practice.