

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
Presentation on Regulations 105 CMR 201.000: Head Injuries and Concussions In Extracurricular Athletic Activities**

**Introduction**

* This presentation is an addendum to the CDC Heads Up Free Continuing Education Training for Medical Providers and part of the MDPH Approved Clinical Training.
* This presentation summarizes the Massachusetts regulations 105 CMR 201.000: Head Injuries and Concussions In Extracurricular Athletic Activities. Understanding of the these regulations is a prerequisite to duly licensed physicians, nurse practitioners, certified athletic trainers and neuropsychologists for completing the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Approved Clinical Training. All of the above must complete a DPH approved clinical training by September 2013 to provide medical clearance for student athletes to return to play.

**Scope of Regulation 105 CMR 201.000: Head Injuries and Concussions In Extracurricular Athletic Activities**

* In July 2010, Governor Patrick signed Chapter 166 of Acts of 2010, a law on sports-related head injuries to promote the safety of young athletes in Massachusetts.
* The Department of Public Health wrote the regulations ***Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Activities 105 CMR 201.000*** to implement this law and provides standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training, and management regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in any extracurricular athletic activity.
* These regulations apply to public middle and high schools serving grade 6 through high school graduation and other schools subject to the official rules of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). (The statute does not apply to Pop Warner, Little League, Town or Club Sports.)

**Annual Training**

* The regulations stress a team approach, bringing together all those in the school community responsible for the student’s safety to understand the risks of concussion so they can respond appropriately.
* The major components of these Head Injuries and Sports Concussion Regulations cover:
  + *Annual Training* (required for students, parents and school medical and athletic staff)
  + *School Policies* re: prevention and management of sports concussion
  + *Exclusion from Play* when sustaining a head injury or suspected concussion
  + *Medical Clearance* and *Return to Play*
  + Data Reporting to the Department of Public Health
* The required Annual Training applies to one school year and must be repeated for every subsequent year. (The Annual Training is different than the Clinical Training. School coaches, school physicians, trainers, nurses, athletic directors, students who participate in an extracurricular athletic activity and their parents must take the annual training.)

**Annual Training Courses**

* Two, free online courses meet the annual training requirement.

1) ***Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports*** from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>

2) ***Concussion in Sports: What you Need to Know*** from the National Federation of State High School Associations

Go to: <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>

* There are other (in person) annual training programs that have been approved by MDPH and can be found at: www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion

**Documentation and Review of Forms**

* The school shall ensure that all forms required by the regulations are completed and reviewed. These forms are posted at [www.mass.gov/sportsconcussion](http://www.mass.gov/sportsconcussion) and are:

**(1) Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities, (or school-based equivalent)**

* + To be reviewed by coaches so as to identify students who are at greater risk of repeated head injuries;
  + To be reviewed by school nurse, physician and certified athletic trainer (if appropriate) to identify students who have had previous head injuries.

**(2) Report of a Head Injury During Sports Season Form**

* + To be completed by coaches immediately after the game or practice for head injuries that result in the student being removed from play due to a *possible* concussion.
  + To be completed by parent/guardian if the student has a head injury outside of school related extracurricular athletic activities.

**(3) Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form**

* + The medical clearance should be only provided *after* a graduated return to play plan has been completed and student has been symptom free at all stages.

**School Policies**

All school districts and schools must have policies and procedures governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries. At a minimum, these policies shall include:

* Annual training requirement;
* Documentation of annual physical examination;
* Pre-participation Head Injury Reporting forms, submission and review;
* Medical/nursing review of reports of head injury during the season;
* Procedures for removing student athletes from play and referring for medical evaluation;
* Protocol for medical clearance for return to play;
* Procedure for the development and implementation of post-concussion graduated reentry plans;
* Requirements for coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers and volunteers to teach strategies that minimize sports-related head injury and prohibit dangerous play;

**Exclusion from Play**

* Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and ***may not return to the practice or competition that day.***
* The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play and shall communicate, by the end of the next business day, with the Athletic Director and school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.
* If a student suffers a head injury outside of school-sponsored extracurricular athletics, parents must inform the coach, school nurse or other school staff designated by school policy about any head injury that a student suffers while not participating in a school-sponsored extracurricular athletic activity. School staff need this information to ensure students’ safe participation in school athletics.

**The Clinician’s Role: Graduated Reentry Plan**

* Each student who is removed from practice or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion shall have a written graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.
* The plan shall be developed by the student's teachers, guidance counselor, school nurse, certified athletic trainer if on staff, neuropsychologist if involved, parent, members of the student support and assistance team or individualized education program team as appropriate and in consultation with the student's primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.
* The written plan shall include instructions for students, parents and school personnel, addressing but not be limited to:

(a) Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate;

(b) Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed;

(c) Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities;

(d) Frequency of assessments by the school nurse, school physician, team physician, certified athletic trainer if on staff, or neuropsychologist if available until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized; and

(e) A plan for communication and coordination between and among school personnel and between the school, the parent, and the student's primary care provider or physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.

**The Clinician’s Role: Graduated Reentry to Extracurricular Athletics**

* The student must be symptom-free at rest in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities. The student must be symptom free at rest, during exertion and with cognitive activity in order to complete the graduated re-entry plan and be medically cleared to play.
* Returning a student to play after a known or suspected concussion places the student at risk for long-term health consequences, including serious injury or even death.
* The risk of substantial injury is particularly high if the athlete suffers a subsequent concussion before completely recovering from the prior one.
* This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome).

**The Clinician’s Role: Medical Clearance**

* Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion must receive medical clearance for return to play.
* Medical Clearance must be documented using the ***Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form,*** or school-based equivalent, and provided to the Athletic Director prior to resuming extracurricular athletic activity. This form can be found at: [www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion](http://www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion).

**The Clinician’s Role: Medical Clearance for Return to Play**

* Only the following clinicians may authorize a student to return to play:

(1) A duly licensed physician;

(2) A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;

(3) A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or

(4) A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery; or

(5) A duly licensed physician assistant under the supervision of a licensed physician.

* The ultimate return to play decision is a clinical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach that includes consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate.

**Clinical Training**

* By September 2013, physicians, nurse practitioners, certified athletic trainers, and neuropsychologists providing medical clearance for return to play shall verify that they have received Department-approved training in post traumatic head injury assessment and management or have received equivalent training as part of their licensure or continuing education.
* A list of MDPH approved Clinical Training can be found at:

[www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion](http://www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion)

**Resources and Weblinks**

* For a copy of the Massachusetts sports concussion law, regulations, required forms for schools, FAQs, required annual and clinical trainings, school model policies, and year-end reporting form for schools go to [www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion](http://www.mass.gov/dph/sportsconcussion)

This website includes information about applying to become a provider of the *annual* training or *clinical* training as well as links to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention information on sports concussion.