

# Sports Concussions

Signs and Symptoms

Where do we go from here?

Beth Adams M.Ed LRC, Neurotrauma Rehabilitation Specialist

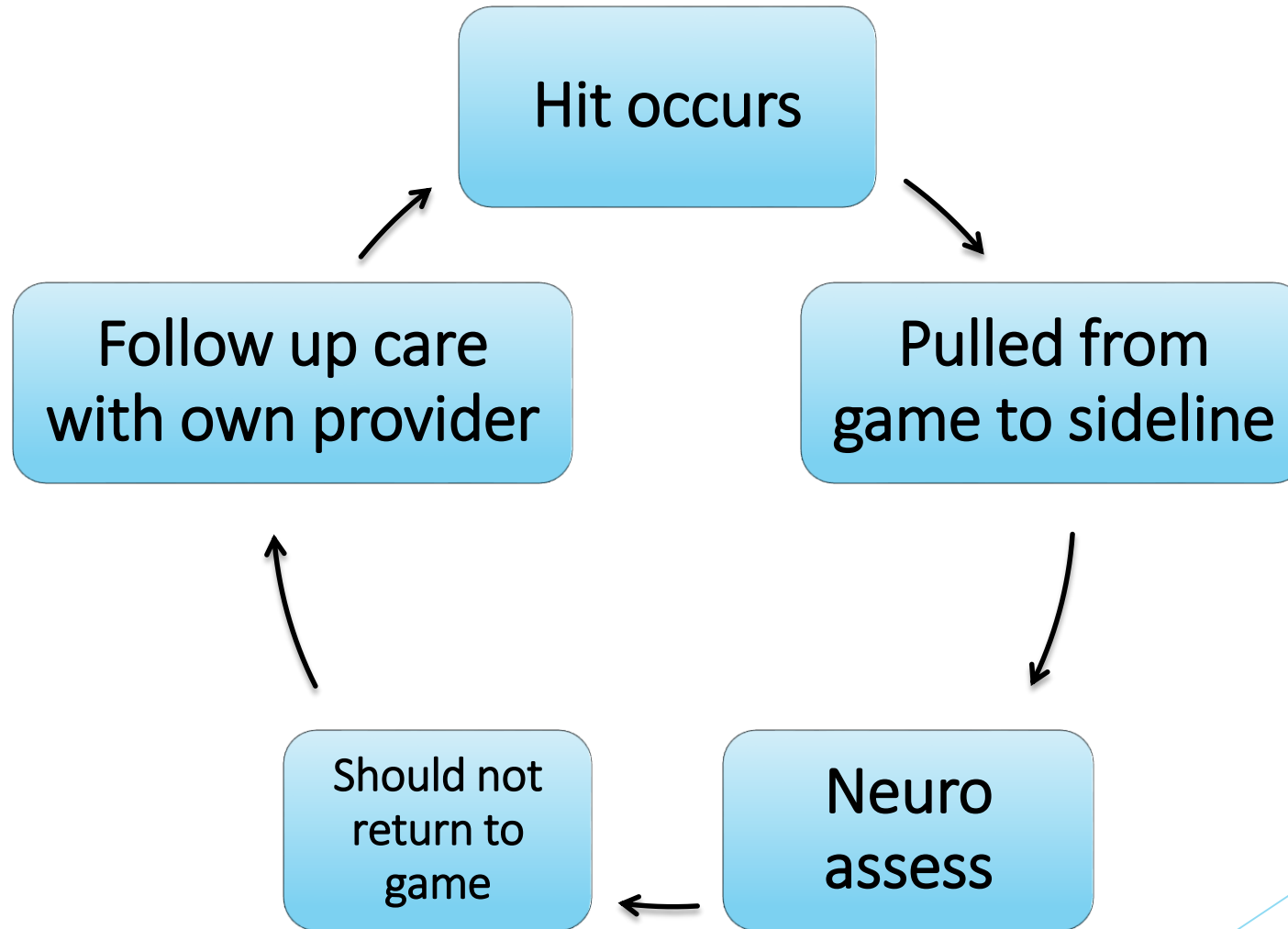
Ted Johnson, NFL Player, NBC Sports Analyst

# Sports Concussions

A concussion is a brain injury that can occur in both non-contact and contact sports. This injury results from front to back-side to side or rotational movement of the brain within the skull caused by a bump, blow or jolt. In addition, a second impact not diagnosed can be fatal.

**No two cases are alike.  
The continuum is different for each athlete.**

# Sports Concussion



This is not the same response for every player; some concussions not caught in time or identified during play.

# Some Common Questions

- “Can I go back into the game once I sit out for a bit?”
- I don’t know if I have a concussion what does it feel like?
- I had my “bell rung” but my coach told me I was fine and returned me back to the game.
- Do I have to leave my team if I am not able to play with a concussion? That is my social network.
- What specialist can I see for my concussion? What if after that specialist I need someone else? Where do I go?

**Proper treatment of a concussion is  
critical**

# Signs and Symptoms

- Irritability, moodiness, fogginess, decreased initiation, confusion, flat affect, crying or laughing easily, forgetfulness, executive functioning off (ie planning and problem solving, executing a task, organization) , anger, depression and anxiety to name a few.
- Isolating one self from friends and family
- Difficulty on the job or at school
- “You look fine.” Oftentimes you cannot look at a person and know they have had a concussion.

# Gaps in the Continuum of Care

- Provider diagnoses incorrectly and symptoms persist
- Those working with the concussed individual may not be aware of appropriate resources
- Despite providers referring individual to resources the ball may be dropped without follow through
- Family extremely overwhelmed; “You look fine”
- Advocate for proper return to school/work/sports
- Extensive wait to see provider

# Know Your Local/State Resources

## Your Primary Care Provider

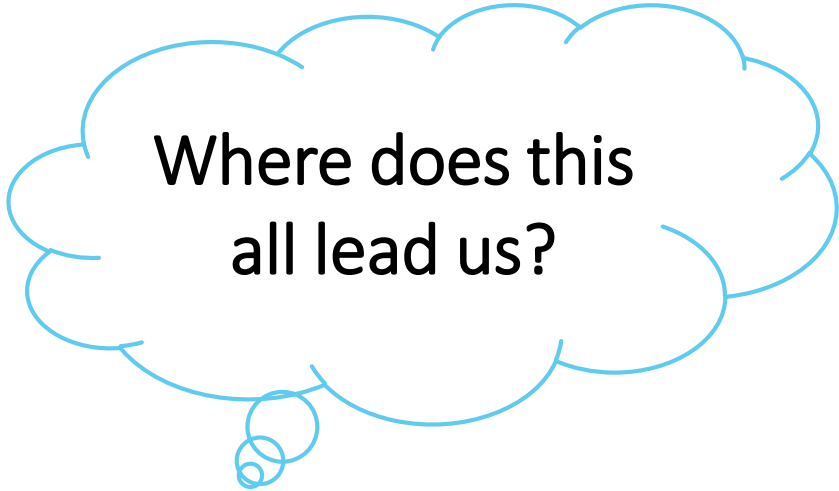
Brain Injury Association of MA

Statewide Head Injury Program

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Your school personnel (nurse, special ed)

Case Management/Advocacy Services



Where does this  
all lead us?

To brainstorm as a group on how to identify and work with concussions and bridge services so people do not fall between the cracks.

To have a clearinghouse statewide to report each and every concussion both non sport and sport when the school, team, parent is made aware of.

Currently sports concussions are reported to the state but not other types.

To know that people with concussions need time to heal and it is imperative that we move them appropriately through the system step by step when they are ready.

# How to Find Quality Providers that Know this Field of Specialty

Utilize the information you have learned at time of your diagnosis



Meet with providers who will be caring for you



Follow through with care/appointments



Meet with school faculty to discuss accommodation's for effective transition back to the classroom

## **Bridging the Gap:**

Transitioning from the playing field to concussion care

**Monday morning**

Have all providers on deck to assist with the transition and the continuum of care can move along with less disruption.

Student will need accommodations and possible 504 plan.

Families and friends can support the individual in many ways. Give them space and be patient. This may go on longer than originally expected.