

[IMAGE]

Think Straight: Concussion Facts

By Charles Masarsky, DC, FICC

If you've done any research on concussions, you have probably already familiarized yourself with the Zurich Statement¹ and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's fact sheet,² among other relevant literature. While public awareness of the problem is much greater today than it was 10-15 years ago, there is still much confusion among the general public. Here are some important points to be aware of and discuss with your doctor:

You Don't Have to Hit Your Head to Hurt Your Brain

Many people still think a blow to the head is required to get a concussion. There is now widespread scientific consensus that an injury to another part of the body can transmit enough force to the head to cause concussion. Therefore, all sorts of trauma, including sports injuries, assaults, slip-and-fall incidents and whiplash, can cause concussion.

A Concussion Doesn't Always Result in a Knockout

While a dazed feeling is common, loss of consciousness actually afflicts a minority of concussion victims. This fact still surprises many people.

The Concussion You Have Immediately Isn't Necessarily the Concussion You Have Eventually

The severity of the concussion may not be apparent until hours or days after the trauma. If this is not understood by those in close contact with the concussion victim, deterioration can be easily missed.

You Can't Just Snap a Picture of a Concussion

Concussion - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Ever suffered a blow to the head, but an MRI was done and found no concussion? The misconception that standard imaging will rule out concussion is still prevalent. A careful history and physical exam are essential in evaluating and following the concussion victim.

Concussions Don't Always Go Away by Themselves

Sadly, concussion victims are too often told to "walk it off," even today. While a majority of adults recover from signs and symptoms of concussion within 10 days (3-4 weeks for children and adolescents), a significant minority develop post-concussion chronicity.

An Injury That Hurts Your Brain Hurts Your Spine

The misconception that doctors of chiropractic have no legitimate role to play in managing the concussion victim is unfortunately widespread within the health professional community, as well as the lay public. It surely boggles your imagination that someone could emerge from a concussive injury and not have new subluxations or exacerbation of existing ones.³ Recent clinical findings indicate failure to correct these subluxations can be a factor in chronicity of concussion symptoms.⁴

References

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