



## Michael Rippee

[theBMSproject.org](http://theBMSproject.org)

Dr. Rippee completed medical school at the Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City and his Neurology residency at the Univ. of Kansas Medical Center where he is now an Associate Professor. He is the Medical Director of the Center for Concussion Management at the Univ. of Kansas Health System. His practice is Sports Neurology which is mainly comprised of treating patients with concussion.

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**TOPIC ARTICLE**

## "Concussions"

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A concussion, the result of a force that causes the brain tissue to stretch, compress, and/or rotate violently, is an important topic in the sports world. The CDC estimates that between 2 and 4 million sport related concussions occur each year. While these

are considered "mild traumatic brain injuries," there is nothing mild about them. Although up to 80% of concussions resolve spontaneously within 4-6 weeks, the injury is a serious one to consider. If not treated appropriately in the beginning, these can lead to prolonged symptoms and in rare cases, when re-injury occurs shortly after the initial event, more serious brain trauma including death could occur.

The most important thing is to recognize when someone has suffered a concussion. Sometimes it is obvious—a vicious hit that results in a loss of consciousness or abnormal movements resembling a seizure—as has been seen in recent years in the NFL. However, it often is not as clear. It does not require a massive impact, nor even an impact to the head. A sharp enough blow to the body that causes the brain to move about within the skull can be sufficient to cause a concussion.

### Signs of a Concussion

Only 10-15% of concussions result in loss of consciousness. More common signs may include dizziness or imbalance, headache, vision changes, nausea, emotional changes, and/or memory issues. If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, the first action is to remove them from play. Next, care should be sought by a medical professional, ideally one with training in the evaluation and treatment of concussions. Treatment may initially consist of "brain rest" with a gradual return to activity as symptoms begin to subside. In some cases, physical therapy or medications may be indicated. Only when symptoms have completely resolved and a gradual return to play has been completed should an athlete be returned to compete.

### Further Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/index.html>

<https://www.concussion.org/>

#### EMERGENCY

In a crisis call "911" immediately

● If considering self-harm, call "988"  
The National Suicide Intervention Lifeline

#### SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

To speak to a counselor,

Call (800) 656-4673  
RAINN

#### BULLYING/HAZING, VIOLENCE, ADDICTIONS & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

For helpful resources,

[thebmsproject.org/Safety](http://thebmsproject.org/Safety)

#### CHILD ABUSE

To report suspected child abuse,

Call (800) 422-4453

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline

It is recommended that incident(s) of serious misconduct be reported to law enforcement.  
Minors should report incidents of misconduct to their parent(s) or guardian(s).