

TOOL TYPE **HANDOUT**
GEOGRAPHY **ALL**

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SOURCE: ACTSAFE.CA

CONCUSSIONS TOOLBOX TALK HANDOUT

BENEFITS

June is Brain Injury Awareness Month in Canada. According to [Brain Injury Canada](#), brain injury is a silent epidemic. Concussions are a common type of traumatic brain injury—and they’re not all sports-related. For example, on average, WorkSafeBC accepts more than 1,200 claims a year from workers who’ve experienced a concussion at work.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Adapt this handout, based on a fact sheet from Actsafec.ca, which works with BC’s entertainment industries to keep workers safe, for your OHS program and operations. Give it to workers as part of a safety talk to educate them on concussions, their symptoms and how to prevent getting them.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Actsafec.ca

[PPE: Take 5 Steps to Comply with the Safety Headwear Requirements](#)

[Head Safety Toolbox Talk Handout](#)

[Spot the Safety Violation: Protect Workers’ Heads & Brains](#)

[Spot the Safety Violation: Improper Use of PPE Renders It Ineffective](#)

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Recognition

- A concussion is a common form of brain injury.
- Concussions most often occur without a loss of consciousness. However, a concussion *may* involve loss of consciousness.

A concussion is generally the result of a blow to the head, face or jaw, or even elsewhere on the body. A concussion may also result from a whiplash effect to the head and neck. Health effects can include wide range of short- or long-term changes affecting thinking, sensation, language or emotions.

Common Symptoms and Signs of Concussion

If a co-worker experiences *one or more* symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms in yourself, remove the individual from work and seek medical advice or the advice of a doctor right away. Some of these symptoms may appear immediately, while others may not be noticed until resuming regular work/exertion days, weeks or months after the injury.

Symptoms noticed by concussion sufferer:

- Headache
- Ringing in ears
- Dizziness
- Tiredness
- Feeling dazed
- Nausea, vomiting
- Seeing stars
- Irritability
- Sensitivity to light
- Confusion
- Disorientation

Symptoms that may be noticed by co-workers:

- Poor balance or coordination
- Slow or slurred speech
- Poor concentration
- Delayed response to questions
- Vacant stare
- Unusual emotions, personality change

What to Do if a Concussion May Have Occurred

1. Tell your employer, supervisor or first-aider about the incident.
2. Remove the individual from work. Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion if they've experienced a bump or blow to the head or body. DO NOT try and judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
3. Seek advice from a doctor right away. Doctors have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. Recording the following information can help healthcare professionals in assessing the individual after the injury:
 - Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head or body
 - Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
 - Any seizures or memory loss immediately following the injury
 - Number of previous concussions (if any)
4. Keep the individual away from work the day of the injury and until a doctor says they're symptom-free and it's okay to return to work. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—

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usually within a short period of time (hours, days or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of long-term problems.

Recovery

The best medical management for a concussion is rest, both physical and mental. Continuing to push yourself with work will likely make symptoms worse. Although most people recover fully, improvement depends on a number of factors including injury severity, age and healthiness. It's not courageous to return to work before a concussion has been cleared by a doctor—it's dangerous.

Prevention

Protective equipment can reduce the risk and severity of injuries to the face and skull. It's important that helmets, hardhats or mouth guards are of high quality, well maintained and properly fitted, and are worn consistently and correctly.

Bottom Line

If you think you or one of your co-workers may have sustained a concussion:

1. Tell your supervisor
2. Remove yourself/that individual from work
3. Don't assess the severity of the injury yourself
4. Immediately seek the advice of a doctor.

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