



Concussions in Children

UNDERSTANDING CONCUSSIONS AND VISION PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN

A concussion is a type of brain injury that can happen in children. About 1.4 million kids and teens get concussions each year in the United States. Most concussions in kids happen when they play sports or during other activities. Doctors who take care of children can help find and treat concussions. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have rules to help doctors take care of kids with concussions. These rules help doctors know how to spot and treat concussion symptoms, including eye problems.

WHY VISION PROBLEMS HAPPEN AFTER A CONCUSSION

Concussions can hurt the brain's ability to control what you see. The parts of the brain that help you see are very sensitive. Even a small bump to the head can hurt them. This can cause problems with your eyes, like trouble seeing clearly, blurry vision, or tired eyes. Eye problems are common in children with concussions. Up to one-third of kids may have symptoms that last longer than they should. These eye problems can make it hard for children to read, focus, and do well in school. It is important to find these problems early to help kids get better quickly.

COMMON VISION PROBLEMS AFTER A CONCUSSION

Some common eye problems after a concussion include:

- Trouble focusing your eyes
- Eyes not working together when looking at things up close
- Problems moving your eyes (like following a moving ball or looking quickly from one thing to another)
- Eyes that hurt a lot in bright light



These problems can cause blurry vision, eye pain, trouble reading, and problems paying attention. These eye problems often get better on their own over time. But if they last a long time, it might help to see a special doctor for treatment.

HOW TO DIAGNOSE VISION PROBLEMS AFTER A CONCUSSION

When a child gets a concussion, doctors need to ask about eye problems, such as blurry vision, seeing double, or eye pain. A complete eye exam is important to check for eye problems like trouble focusing, eye movement problems, and trouble seeing clearly. Some tests, like checking how well the eyes can follow a moving object or change focus, can help doctors find eye problems. It is important for doctors to check these areas early so they can suggest extra help at school, like using bigger letters or taking breaks during work.

TREATING VISION PROBLEMS AFTER A CONCUSSION

Eye problems can make it hard for children to go back to school or sports. If a child has ongoing eye problems, it might help to see a special doctor (like a sports medicine doctor or an eye doctor/ophthalmologist) for more treatment. Some ways to treat eye problems after a concussion include:

- Using special glasses
- Eye exercises
- Giving extra time for reading or homework
- Making tasks easier by using bigger letters or reading books out loud
- Special glasses or hats with brims for light sensitivity

These treatments can help children deal with their eye problems while they get better.

CONCLUSION

It is important to notice and treat eye problems in children after a concussion to help them get better faster and return to school and activities. Most children will get better on their own within a few weeks, but some may need extra help. Finding problems early and treating them can



help recovery. Special glasses, eye exercises, or special help at school can be useful for children with ongoing symptoms.

SUMMARY FOR THE PATIENT OR CAREGIVER

If your child has a concussion, it's important to watch for eye problems like blurry vision, eye pain, or trouble focusing. Most children get better within a few weeks, but some may need extra help if their symptoms last longer. Doctors can test your child's eyes and suggest ways to help with schoolwork, like using special glasses for reading, using bigger letters, or taking breaks during long tasks. If your child has serious eye problems that don't get better, seeing a special doctor, like an ophthalmologist, might be needed. With the right care and support, most children can get better and return to normal activities.

Created with assistance from:

[Vision and Concussion: Symptoms, Signs, Evaluation, and Treatment](#)

Christina L. Master, Darron Bacal, Matthew F. Grady, et al., AAP SECTION ON OPHTHALMOLOGY; AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY; AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PEDIATRIC OPHTHALMOLOGY AND STRABISMUS; and AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED ORTHOPTISTS; Vision and Concussion: Symptoms, Signs, Evaluation, and Treatment. *Pediatrics* August 2022; 150 (2): e2021056047. 10.1542/peds.2021-056047

Strategies for Prevention of Concussions

[Pediatric Sport-Related Concussion: AAP Recommendations 2023](#)

Updated/Created: 06/2025