

# GOAL POST

## Concussion Management

by: Meaghan Shearer Adams

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### What is a concussion?

A concussion is a disturbance in brain function caused by a force to the head. The brain may accelerate then decelerate within the skull, or it may rotate within the skull. Both types of injuries damage brain cells (neurons) which can produce a variety of signs and symptoms.

A concussion may be caused by a direct blow to the head or face, or a blow elsewhere on the body, which transmits force to the brain. Examples include helmet-to-helmet contact, or a body check into the boards.

### Symptoms

An athlete with a concussion may experience a few or many of the following:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Headache, dizziness, light-headedness
- Balance problems
- Confusion, feeling “foggy”
- Fatigue, feeling sluggish
- Change in sleep pattern
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Irritability, depression
- Disorientation, “seeing stars”
- Concentration or memory problems
- Ringing in the ears

If an athlete has a concussion, parents or coaches might notice:

- Loss of consciousness
- Appearing stunned or confused
- Forgetting
- Unable to answer questions about game or score
- Moves clumsily, responds slowly
- Behaviour or personality change

### What should you do?

As an athlete, you need to tell your parents or coaches right away if you feel concussion symptoms after a hit. It’s important to let people know so that you can get help right away, and so that the injury doesn’t get worse.

As parents and coaches, be open to athletes coming forward to report injuries. Make sure they don’t return to play until their symptoms have resolved. Encourage them to seek advice from a physician or physiotherapist who has experience working with athletes with concussion. Early detection and appropriate management are very important to helping athletes recover fully and return as quickly and as safely as possible.

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## STAFF PROFILE

**Meaghan Shearer Adams, HBSc, MScPT, Registered Physiotherapist**

*Kitchener-South location.*



Meaghan graduated from Queen's University in 2006 with an Honours Bachelor of Life Science degree, and again in 2008 with a Masters of Physical Therapy. Since graduation, Meaghan has worked in pediatric and orthopedic settings, and acted as a physiotherapist for Skate Canada, Hockey Canada, the London Half Marathon, Thames Valley Rugby Athletics Association, and Fanshawe College Varsity Athletics. Prior to joining GRSM, Meaghan became certified as a Pilates instructor with Stott Pilates, and completed the Fowler Kennedy Sport Medicine fellowship in Sport Physiotherapy. She continues to pursue further education and certification in manual therapy, sports medicine, acupuncture, Pilates training, and physiotherapy management of concussions.

Meaghan has a special interest in concussion rehab, and has taken several courses to further her knowledge in this area. She is also working toward a PhD in Neuroscience at the University of Waterloo, studying some of the effects of concussions.

## Mouthguard Myth



Research has shown that mouthguards do not prevent concussions... they are merely falsely marketed. However, mouthguards are a great way to prevent serious mouth and dental injuries.

## Let's Get 'HUMERUS'

"All hockey players are bilingual; they speak English and profanity." – Gordie Howe

## Resources

For more information on **Concussion Management** check out the resources below:

**Grand River Sports Medicine Centre:**  
[www.grsm.ca](http://www.grsm.ca)

**ThinkFirst Canada:**  
[www.thinkfirst.ca](http://www.thinkfirst.ca)

**Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 3:**  
<http://www.thinkfirst.ca/downloads/concussion/SCAT3.pdf>

**Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 3 For Children:**  
<http://www.thinkfirst.ca/downloads/concussion/SCAT3-child.pdf>

**Hockey Canada:**  
<http://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/Hockey-Programs/Safety/Concussions.aspx>

**Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport Blog:**  
<http://www.cces.ca/en/blog-36-brain-injuries-the-hidden-damage>

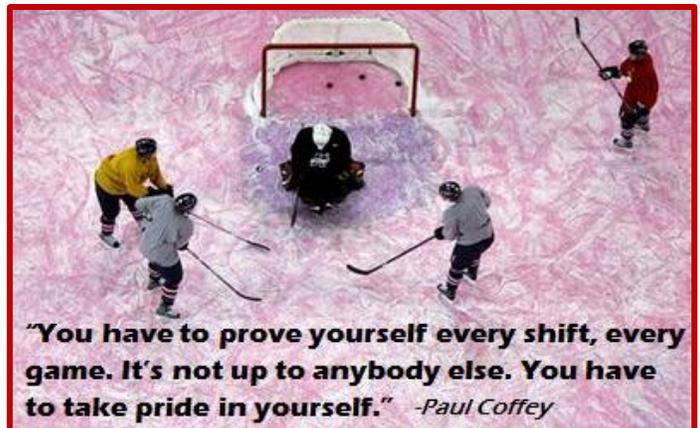
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**"You have to prove yourself every shift, every game. It's not up to anybody else. You have to take pride in yourself."** -Paul Coffey

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