Mazenod Football Club – Concussion Policy (2025)

Purpose
Mazenod Football Club is committed to protecting players from the risks associated with concussion. This policy ensures a consistent, safe response to suspected concussions and provides guidance for parents, coaches, and players.

1. Immediate Removal from Play

Any player displaying **concussion symptoms** must be **immediately removed** from training or match play. Players **cannot return to play on the same day**.

Coach responsibilities:

- Remove the player from activity immediately.
- Notify the player's parent or guardian.
- Record the incident, including symptoms observed and actions taken.

2. Concussion Symptoms

Symptoms may include (but are not limited to):

- Headache
- Dizziness or balance problems (e.g., walking a straight line)
- Confusion or memory loss (e.g., "What day is it?", "Who are we playing against?")
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- Vision changes (double or blurred vision)
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Fatigue, drowsiness, or irritability

- Slow response to questions or tasks

Red Flag Symptoms – seek urgent medical attention immediately:

- Worsening headache
- Repeated vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsions
- Slurred speech or neurological deficit
- Deteriorating level of consciousness or severe confusion

Call **000** if any red flag symptoms occur.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

Coaches and Team Officials:

- Remove players showing symptoms from play immediately.
- Inform parents/guardians and ensure medical assessment is arranged.
- Record the incident.

Parents/Guardians:

- Ensure the player receives appropriate medical evaluation.
- Follow the stepwise return-to-play protocol provided by a medical professional.

Medical Professionals:

- Assess and diagnose concussion.
- Provide written clearance for the player to progress through return-to-play steps.

4. Return-to-Play (RTP) Protocol

Players must follow a **graduated, stepwise approach**, with **minimum 24 hours between each step**:

1. **Complete rest** – physical and cognitive until symptom-free.
2. **Light aerobic activity** – walking, cycling, swimming at low intensity.
3. **Sport-specific training (non-contact)** – light ball work, drills.
4. **Full training with contact** – normal training with coach supervision.
5. **Full match play** – return to competitive play.

Medical clearance is required before advancing through each step.

5. Documentation & Education

- All concussion incidents must be documented here, including symptoms, actions taken, and clearance.
- Coaches, players, and parents are encouraged to use the **HeadCheck app:** Download here now
- Refer to the **FFA Concussion Guidelines** for detailed procedures.

6. Additional Notes

- This policy applies to **all Mazenod Football Club players**, juniors and seniors alike.
- Coaches and parents are expected to educate themselves and players about concussion recognition and management.
- Players should never return to play while experiencing symptoms.