

WHAT IS BASELINE ASSESSMENT?

Pre-season baseline assessment is cutting edge technology that is used to help ensure the safety and recovery of our young athletes who sustain a concussion. It is a short computerized test administered prior to the beginning of the season that measures selected brain processes and scores the test for each individual athlete. If an athlete sustains a concussion during the season the result of a post concussion test is compared to pre-season baseline results to help determine the severity and extent of the injury.

Utilizing a baseline test on student athletes can change the way concussions are identified and managed. There continues to be a shift from using global guideline based concussion management measures to utilizing a more objective, individualized based management system that includes baseline testing. A concussion is difficult to diagnose and even more difficult to treat. The data helps the physician and athletic trainer determine when the athlete's brain functions have returned to baseline scores and when it is safe **for** the athlete to return to sports or activity.

Research confirms that multiple successive concussions have the potential for more severe and lasting problems for athletes. Making certain that the brain is given time to heal following a concussion, both physically and cognitively, before return to active play is critical to the health and well being of the athlete. For the purpose of continuing play and or competition, be aware that players suffering from a concussion may minimize and/or deny symptoms. Sometimes signs are hard to recognize, but that does not mean there is no danger.

All concussions are not the same and therefore should not be treated the same. We need to treat each individual concussion until it is resolved and the use of baseline testing gives us another tool to assist us in making sure that the brain has been allowed ample time to heal.