



## Guelph Minor Hockey Association – Concussion Protocol

**Effective: September 10, 2024**

“A concussion, also known as a mild traumatic brain injury, is a head injury that temporarily affects brain functioning. Symptoms may include loss of consciousness; memory loss; headaches; difficulty with thinking, concentration, or balance; nausea; blurred vision; dizziness; sleep disturbances, and mood changes.” (Wikipedia)

Guelph Minor Hockey Association will educate our members through appropriate training and policies regarding preventative measures to:

1. reduce the risk of concussions,
2. encourage increased reporting and
3. raise awareness of long term health effects of untreated concussions.

GMHA will have policies in place to enable the proper reporting of all concussions and follow Hockey Canada’s safe return to sport.

### Education/Training

- *Shift Concussion Management* - 1515 Gordon Street, Guelph. 519-822-2226, <https://www.theshift.ca/>
  - Provide free in-person education sessions for team Trainers and any member interested. Contact person for the Board: Scott Haller, ([link to brief bio](#)) [scott@shiftconcussion.ca](mailto:scott@shiftconcussion.ca)
  - Provide free access to training modules where the most up to date information on concussion management is available
  - Training to review and reinforce education and protocols outlined by OMHA and Hockey Canada (<https://www.omha.net/page/show/925387-safety-initiatives-and-trainer-resources>)
- Note: GMHA provides body checking clinics to all players prior to the commencement of their U14 year, at no cost.

## Equipment

- All players/coaches/volunteers of GMHA must wear appropriate equipment while on ice including, but not limited to, a CSA approved helmet.
- All players shall follow the Ontario Minor Hockey Association list of [required equipment](#).

## Clinical Concussion Baseline Assessment

- This can be performed by *Shift Concussion Management* or a clinic of the team's choice
  - Shift Concussion Management has agreed to conduct assessments for all GMHA teams. They will conduct a 2-part assessment; *ImPACT*, a computer based assessment for players/individuals, and an in-person physical test conducted by a clinician. For the 2024-25 season the cost is at a negotiated team rate of \$340 (Equalling approx \$20 per player). Computer testing can be completed at home or in the clinic. **Coaching staff will coordinate booking these sessions. Please contact your coach and not Shift individually.**
- **NOTE:** "Individual" shall include coaches, trainers and any on ice volunteers

Baseline assessments will become **mandatory**, to be rolled out as follows:

### **2024-25 Hockey Season**

- Mandatory baseline assessments for all players of U14 Representative Teams and older. Assessments to be completed and confirmed by October 15, 2024. Coaching staff is strongly encouraged to have assessments conducted as well.
- Testing for teams to take place on Monday(s), Tuesday(s) and Wednesday(s) Saturday(s) in September from 5pm-7pm, scheduled by team trainers, at the *Shift Concussion Management* Clinic. Or teams may attend for baseline assessments at a clinic of their choice.
- All other age groups/teams/players will be encouraged to have baseline assessments completed. Teams/trainers can contact *Shift*, or a clinic of their choosing, to schedule.
- Information and educational tools are available on the [GMHA website](#).

### **2025-26 Hockey Season**

- Mandatory baseline assessments for all players of Representative Teams, including all Advanced Development Program (ADP) Teams and Advanced League (AL) Teams. Assessments to be completed by October 15, 2025.
- Coaching staff is strongly encouraged to have baseline assessments conducted as well.

### **2026-27 Hockey Season**

- Mandatory baseline assessments for all players of Representative Teams, including all Advanced Development Program (ADP) Teams and Advanced League (AL) Teams. Assessments to be completed by October 15, 2026.
- Mandatory baseline assessments for all players of House League Teams to be completed by November 15, 2026
- Coaching staff is strongly encouraged to have baseline assessments conducted as well.

### Concussion Reporting and Management

- Trainers and Coaches to Follow [Hockey Canada Concussion Procedures](#).
- Refer to the [Hockey Canada Concussion Reporting Card](#) to help recognize signs and symptoms of a potential traumatic brain injury/concussion.
- GMHA concussion reporting [form](#) to be completed for each incident of potential concussion/traumatic head injury.
- Trainers and Coaches are to follow up with the player/individual to ensure they are aware of appropriate treatment options and a safe return to sport action plan is in place as outlined below.

#### **STEPS FOR CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT:**

(Refer to the GMHA [Concussion Protocol Flow Chart](#) for more details)

##### **STEP 1 – PREPARE**

**Baseline Assessment (recommended for all, mandatory for some teams as of 2024/25, mandatory for ALL teams as of 2026/27, as described above)**

- Having this baseline helps to:
  - protect players from undiagnosed concussions, and
  - add confidence and safety to the return to play process.
- GMHA has made it mandatory for some teams and age groups as part of a roll-out plan.
- This is recommended for all teams, either through SHIFT or another clinic of their choice.

##### **STEP 2 – IDENTIFY & REPORT**

**Concussion Reporting (this is what you do if/when a concussion is suspected)**

- Refer to the [Hockey Canada Concussion Reporting Card](#) to help recognize signs and symptoms of a potential traumatic brain injury/concussion
- When there is a potential concussion/traumatic head injury; team trainer or coach is to complete the GMHA concussion reporting [form](#)
- Proceed to Step 3 if a potential concussion/traumatic brain injury is suspected

##### **STEP 3 – DIAGNOSE & TREAT**

**Concussion Follow-Up (this is what players/families/individuals need to do after the practice/game to determine if the player/individual suffered a concussion or not). This is facilitated by the baseline created in Step 1 when applicable.**

- If the player/individual *has suffered* a concussion, go to Step 4.

- If the player/individual has *not* suffered a concussion, [documentation](#) from a physician is required for immediate return to play

#### STEP 4– RETURN TO PLAY

**This is the process that needs to be followed as part of returning to play after a confirmed concussion, including whatever documentation is required to be filed.**

- Follow Hockey Canada Concussion Card [6-step return to play](#)
- Players/individuals can choose to return to *Shift Concussion Management*; redo ImPACT test, and assessment (2024-25 season cost \$80/player). If players/parents do not have insurance/extended health benefits to cover the cost, Hockey Canada will cover the cost for players. *Shift Concussion Management* to ensure the player/individual is back to baseline testing and can safely return to sport.

#### OR

- Take original baseline assessment to their preferred clinic/clinician to have a post-concussion assessment completed and follow any treatment recommendations.
- Players/individuals should follow any recommendations made by the *Shift Concussion Management*, or their preferred clinic of choice/clinician

#### **Players/Individuals Ready to Return to Play:**

- Trainer/Coach/Convenor **must** obtain a [clearance letter](#) from player's Physician in order to allow player to return to team activities, as per Hockey Canada [memorandum](#) dated December 21, 2012. Copy of letter to be confirmed/sent to Director of Risk Management
- Trainer/Coach shall complete [Concussion Conclusion Form](#) and player may then resume on ice activities