



RUGBY LEAGUE IRELAND

Match-Day Concussion Guidance 2025

For Referees, Coaches & Team Officials

Purpose

This document provides clear, practical guidance for referees, coaches, and team officials on the recognition and management of suspected concussion on match days and during training. It supports the Rugby League Ireland (RLI) Concussion & Head Injury Policy 2025 and prioritises player welfare at all times.

Key Message

If in doubt, sit them out. Player welfare always takes priority over competition.

Recognising Possible Concussion

A concussion should be suspected if a player shows any of the following after a head impact:

- Loss of consciousness (even briefly)
- Appearing dazed, confused, or disoriented
- Unsteady on feet or poor balance
- Slow to get up from the ground
- Holding or clutching the head
- Memory problems or confusion about play
- Headache, dizziness, nausea, or vomiting
- Behavioural or personality changes
- Visual disturbance (blurred or double vision)

Immediate Actions on Match Day

- Stop play if necessary to assess the player.
- Remove the player from the field immediately if concussion is suspected.
- Do NOT allow the player to return to play or training that day.
- Ensure the player is supervised and not left alone.
- Advise the player to seek medical assessment from a qualified healthcare professional.

Authority to Remove a Player

The decision to remove a player from play due to suspected concussion may be made by the referee, coach, team official, medical personnel (if present), or the player themselves. No individual may overrule a removal decision made on welfare grounds.

After the Match

- The player must not return to any rugby league activity until medically assessed.
- The player must follow the RLI Graduated Return-to-Play (RTP) Protocol.
- Written medical clearance is required before return to full contact training and match play.

- Clubs must support recovery and ensure no pressure is placed on the player.

What NOT to Do

- Do NOT allow same-day return to play.
- Do NOT ignore or minimise symptoms.
- Do NOT pressure a player to continue.
- Do NOT rely on the player's own assessment alone.
- Do NOT allow return based on match importance.

Medical Clearance

Rugby League Ireland does not appoint or employ a Medical Officer. All diagnosis and clearance decisions must be made by an appropriately qualified external healthcare professional, such as a registered medical practitioner or physiotherapist.