

SIDELINED

Sport's most common injuries explained – by a real doctor!

THIS MONTH: CONCUSSION

What is it?

According to Dr Will Craddock, Sport and Exercise Physician Registrar at Sydney's Eastern Suburbs Sports Medicine Centre in Bondi, "Concussion is caused by a direct or indirect blow with force transmitted to the head." In other words, it doesn't need to be a head clash. Having a human tree trunk crash tackle you, pounding you into paste, can also bring it on. "It is usually of rapid onset, short lived and spontaneously resolves. It is a functional disturbance rather than a physical injury to the brain."

What are the symptoms?

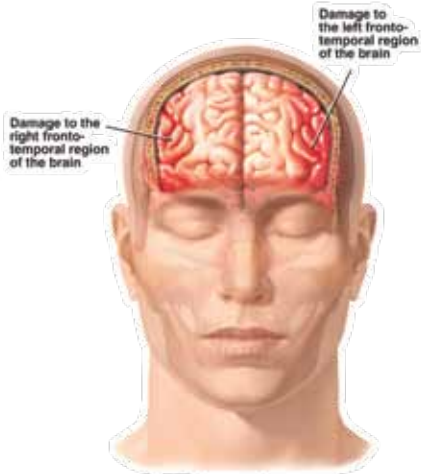
"They may include headache, the most common, nausea or vomiting, altered hearing, blurred vision, dizziness, trouble falling asleep, fogginess, pressure in the head, balance problems, sensitivity to light and noise, feeling slowed down, difficulty concentrating and remembering, fatigue, confusion, drowsiness, sadness and, nervousness or anxiety." So it's sort of like being drunk and hungover at the same time. While swimming in mud. On acid.

How do you treat it?

"Concussed athletes should be observed for the first few hours in case they deteriorate but otherwise should return home with a Head Injury Card, which details signs to watch out for indicating a more serious injury," says Dr Craddock, who also recommends refraining from physical and brain exercise – so avoid cryptic crosswords. Sadly, you also need to keep away from alcohol and aspirin, and don't drive – unless it's *Gran Turismo*.

How long does it last?

"When all symptoms have resolved and balance and brain function is deemed normal, a graduated return-to-sport-program involving light aerobic exercise, sport-specific exercise, non-contact training drills and full contact training may be attempted, with each step taking 24 hours and progression occurring if the athlete remains asymptomatic," Craddock explains. A full return to sport can usually occur within seven to 10 days.



UPDATE

The current concussion rules in footy.

▶ The NRL recommends players don't return to the field post-concussion, but decisions are ultimately made at the team doctor's discretion.

▶ In March, the AFL introduced a new concussion rule, whereby concussed players would not be allowed back on the ground during matches.

▶ The ARU instructs concussed players to take three weeks off from training and playing, unless deemed medically fit to return beforehand.

7-DAY WINTER DIET

Nutritionist Tabitha McIntosh will help your weight drop with the temperature

MONDAY **Breakfast:** Scoff 2/3 cup of oats porridge with an apple or pear grated into it. If you're adding milk, make it skim.

Lunch: Go for some sashimi, miso and edamame, plus one sushi hand roll. Skip the tempura.

Dinner: Trim the fat from a lean steak no bigger than your palm and fry it. Plate it up with two to three cups of salad or steamed vegetables.

TUESDAY **Breakfast:** Toast two slices of soy and linseed. Serve with two poached or hardboiled eggs, grilled tomato and wilted baby spinach.

Lunch: Mix three handfuls of salad with four different coloured veggies. Serve with grilled chicken or turkey breast, or a piece of salmon.

Dinner: Cut a palm-sized chicken breast into small cubes and fry it in extra virgin olive oil, then toss in garlic and three cups of sliced veggies. Splash on some soy sauce. Serve with brown rice.

WEDNESDAY **Breakfast:** Sprinkle one teaspoon of chia seed on 2/3 cup of oats porridge with a grated apple or pear.

Lunch: Get frisky with a frittata. Mix one whole egg and two egg whites. Add feta, zucchini and capsicum in a baking bowl or large muffin tray and bake slowly until the eggs are cooked.

Dinner: Have a legume-based lentil meal, like adzuki bean, ginger and pumpkin casserole or a large bowl of minestrone soup with lentils, cannelloni beans and chickpeas.

THURSDAY **Breakfast:** Two slices of soy and linseed toast with smoked salmon and a light spreading of avocado, low-fat cream cheese and a squeeze of lemon.

Lunch: Wholemeal sandwich with chicken breast and high-fibre salad veggies, like roasted sweet potato, baby spinach and grated carrot. Spread with avocado or hummus.

Dinner: Cook chili con carne, tacos, shepherd's pie or spag bol. Use lean mince, kidney beans or lentils, peas, broccoli, carrots and zucchini.

FRIDAY **Breakfast:** Enjoy some soaked Bircher-style muesli with a natural low-fat yoghurt and some berries.

Lunch: A roast beef or turkey wrap with tomato, baby spinach, pre-baked sweet potato, hummus. Ditch the butter and mayo.

Dinner: Roast chicken breast, with the skin removed. Serve it up with steamed green peas and two cups of roasted vegetables.

WEEKENDS **Breakfast:** An omelette made with two eggs, an extra egg white, mushrooms and spinach. Or baked beans on toast.

Lunch: Choose from any of the weekday lunch options above.

Dinner: Grill 200g of salmon or ocean trout. Serve with two to three cups of salad or steamed veg.

SCORE TIPS AND RECIPES FROM TABITHA AT WWW.AWAKENYOURHEALTH.COM.AU