



Physiotherapy is an essential partner in concussion management

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Ottawa, ON: On August 24, 2017, Parachute Canada released a statement titled: ***Concussion baseline testing not required or recommended for youth athletes: Parachute statement*** (<http://www.parachutecanada.org/news-releases/item/concussion-baseline-testing-not-required-or-recommended-for-youth-athletes>). For the average consumer, parent or coach, this release may help guide decision making and determine how to best-protect children and adolescents from serious injury. However, concerns have been raised that there may be a misunderstanding of the reports or evidence of the value of baseline testing as it relates to concussion guidelines.

Concussion in sport, particularly for young athletes, is an emerging field of study with varied and complex evidence that must be weighed in the creation of clinical or best practice guidelines. Baseline testing is one tool that can be used to understand concussion, provided that the practitioners and consumers of these tests understand the limitations. What is clear, however, is the evidence related to a multi-faceted approach to assessment, diagnosis and management of concussion.

Regardless of whether a baseline test is employed in concussion management, the health care team is the most important aspect in a patient's recovery. Physiotherapy is a valued member of the inter-professional team that assesses, diagnoses and manages concussion in Canada. In reviewing the *Consensus statement on concussion in sport*, a health care team approach for each stage of a concussion is encouraged. This is why the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) and the Sport Physiotherapy Canada (SPC) Division of the CPA strongly supports a collaborative multidisciplinary approach by physicians and healthcare providers with experience in sport-related concussion. This approach is also recommended by CASEM in their statement in response to baseline testing.

CPA also encourages patients, practitioners and consumers to be aware of the *Consensus statement on concussion in sport* (October 2016) <http://bjism.bmj.com/content/bjsports/early/2017/04/26/bjsports-2017-097699.full.pdf> and the Canadian Concussion Collaborative's Four Characteristics of a Good Concussion Clinic. This is a valuable tool to help guide decision making and finding the right treatment for concussion.

The SPC and CPA statement above is provided to encourage a collaborative approach and for each team, coach, athlete and parent to consult their specific protocols to ensure they are up to date and include a licensed health care team with expertise and skills in sport-related concussion.

Founded in 1972, Sport Physiotherapy Canada is a Division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. SPC is a major component of the national sports medicine scene. In Canada, specific guidelines have been established for the recognition of competency for Certificate in Sport Physiotherapy and Diploma in Sport Physiotherapy. Learn more at www.sportphysio.ca.

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