

A Must Read For Horse Riders | Let's Take the Brain Injuries Out Of Riding

Concussion Facts	Concussion Symptoms	Why Should I Report My Symptoms?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concussion is a brain injury that alters the way your brain functions. • Concussion can occur from a blow to the head/body or from a jolting action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Following helmet to helmet contact, and/or ○ Contact with the ground, object or another athlete. ○ Your head is jolted because for instance a horse rears suddenly. • Most concussions occur without being knocked unconscious. • Severity of injury depends on many factors and is not known until symptoms resolve and brain function is back to normal. • All concussions are not created equally. Each person is different, each injury is different, and all injuries should be evaluated by your team medical staff. 	<p>Different symptoms can occur and may not show up for several hours.</p> <p>Common symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Headache • Amnesia/difficulty remembering • Balance problems • Irritability • Dizziness • Difficulty concentrating • Feeling sluggish, foggy or groggy • Loss of consciousness • Nausea • Sensitivity to noise • Sensitivity to light • Double/fuzzy vision • Slowed reaction time • Feeling more emotional • Sleep disturbances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your brain is the most vital organ in your body. • Training or racing while still experiencing symptoms can prolong the time it takes to recover and return to riding. • Unlike other injuries, there may be significant consequences to “racing through” a concussion. • Respective brain injury, when not managed promptly and properly, may cause permanent damage to your brain.

Symptoms may worsen with physical or mental exertion (e.g. lifting, computer use, reading).

What Should I do if I Think I've had a Concussion?

Report It – Never ignore symptoms even if they appear mild. Look out for your helpers. Tell your trainer if you think you or another person may have a concussion.

Get Checked Out – Your trainer, stewards, and fellow riders have your health and well being as their first priority. Your concussion should be managed according to your Principal Racing Authority and the Racing Australia (RA) guidelines. These include being fully asymptomatic, both at rest and after exertion, having a normal neurologic examination, normal Computerised Cognitive Assessment Tool (CCAT) testing (Axon Sport test), and clearance to ride by the PRA medical staff which may include the clearance from an independent neurologic consultant.

Take Care Of Your Brain – According to CDC, “traumatic brain injury can cause a wide range of short or long-term changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions. “These changes may lead to problems with memory and communication, personality changes, as well as depression and the early onset of dementia. Concussions and conditions resulting from repeated brain injury can change your life and your family's forever.

