

## REMOVING A PLAYER

The following is information created by Hockey Trainers Ontario as part of their Hockey Trainers Certification Program provides value information to assist a Team Safety Person or Trainer in the process of removing a player.

- **Communication with the player, parent(s)/guardian(s), coaches is vital** when a decision needs to be made about removing a player from action or returning to play.
- It is the Team Safety Person/Trainer's duty to observe the injured player. If the player is unable participate at their **usual skill level** due to injury or illness, or they complain of pain and/or weakness during the activity, then remove the player from play. Direct the player to a proper medical authority if necessary.
- The Team Safety Person/Trainer's primary goal and duty is not to decide whether a player can return to play **but rather** to ensure the safety of the player is always the top priority.
- When having a conversation with parent(s)/guardian(s) and coaches regarding the removal of a player focus on the facts (ie observable signs/symptoms), allow the other party(ies) the opportunity to share their thought(s), show empathy while actively listening to their perspective(s), and focus the conversation on the player's health and safety.
- In the unlikely event emotions escalate, remain calm and remove yourself from the conversation until you feel comfortable by respectfully stating you are uncomfortable with the specific action(s) and would continue the conversation when emotions have subsided.
- There may be pressure to allow a player to return to play. Safety is the top priority and protecting the player from further injury is essential. **The role of the Team Safety Person/Trainer is not to try to get the player back into competition as soon as possible, but to ensure the player both ready and safe to return to play.** If there are any doubts seek advice from the appropriate medical professional.
- It is recommended that players who are removed from games or practices due to injury or serious illness should obtain a note from the appropriate medical professional prior to returning to regular activity.
- If you are in doubt as to the seriousness of a player's injury or illness, **exercise common sense** and direct the parents to seek medical attention for the player and request that the appropriate medical professional provide a note before permitting the player to play or practice. Clearly communicate the necessity of medical permission from an appropriate medical professional to the player's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the coaching staff. Once medical permission is requested, work with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and coaching staff to ensure a player does not return to participation without it.
- When working with older players who are driving, be aware that certain injuries or circumstances may impair their ability to drive or the decision-making process. **Ensure that an injured player does not drive home alone.**