

NUNAVUT SPEED SKATING ASSOCIATION (NSSA)
Concussion and Return to Speed Skating

Policy Title: Concussion and Return to Speed Skating	Policy No:
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PURPOSE

1. Nunavut Speed Skating Association is committed to maintaining the health of its athletes and believes that an athlete's health is more important than participating in the sport of speed skating. Nunavut Speed Skating Association recognizes the increased awareness of concussions and their long-term effects and Nunavut Speed Skating Association has enacted this Policy as a tool to help manage concussed and possibly-concussed athletes and preserve their health.

COMMUNICATION

2. This Policy will be communicated to all eligible athletes via email.
3. Any amendments to this Policy will be communicated to all eligible athletes via email.

FIELD OF APPLICATION

4. This Policy applies to all athletes, coaches, members and decision-makers of Nunavut Speed Skating Association.

ADHERENCE

5. Nunavut Speed Skating Association adopts and adheres to Speed Skating Canada's Return to Play Procedure which includes both the Return to Speed Skating Protocol and concussion guidelines.

PROCEDURE

6. During all speed skating events, competitions, and practices sanctioned by Nunavut Speed Skating Association, participants (which include coaches, athletes, officials, and other members) will use their best efforts to:
 - a) Be aware of incidents that may cause a concussion, such as:
 - i. Falls
 - ii. Accidents
 - iii. Collisions
 - iv. Head trauma
 - b) Understand the symptoms that may result from a concussion, such as:
 - i. Nausea
 - ii. Poor concentration
 - iii. Amnesia
 - iv. Fatigue
 - v. Sensitivity to light or noise
 - vi. Irritability
 - vii. Poor appetite

viii. Decreased memory

- c) Identify athletes or other individuals who have been involved in any of the above incidents and/or exhibit any of the above symptoms
7. Athletes or other individuals who have been involved in an incident that may cause a concussion and who may exhibit symptoms of a concussion shall be identified and removed from the speed skating activity.
8. Following the athlete being removed from the speed skating activity, the athlete's coach or other individual in charge of the athlete (if the athlete is a minor) or someone familiar to the athlete should:
- a) Call an emergency number (if the situation appears serious)
 - b) Notify the athlete's parent (if the athlete is a minor) or someone close to the athlete (if the athlete is not a minor)
 - c) Have a ride home for the athlete arranged
 - d) Isolate the athlete into a dark room or area
 - e) Reduce external stimulus (noise, other people, etc)
 - f) Remain with the athlete until he or she can be taken home
 - g) Encourage the consultation of a physician
9. Once the athlete's immediate needs have been met, the athlete's family or the athlete should be directed to Speed Skating Canada's Return to Play Procedure.

RETURN TO SPEED SKATING

10. An athlete who has been concussed should only return to speed skating activity by following the steps outlined in Speed Skating Canada's Return to Speed Skating Protocol. An excerpt is provided below, the full reference is available at: <http://www.speedskating.ca/concussions-brain-injuries>

- STEP 1: Complete cognitive and physical rest.** Limit school, work and tasks requiring concentration. Refrain from physical activity until symptoms are gone. Once all symptoms are gone, rest for at least another 24-48 hours and consult a physician, preferably one with experience managing concussion, for clearance to proceed to Step 2.
- STEP 2: Light aerobic exercise** to reintroduce physical activity: 10-15 minutes of low intensity cycling on a stationary bike.
- STEP 3:** 30 minutes of cycling on a stationary bike at 75% of Max Heart Rate.
- STEP 4:** 30 minutes of cycling on a stationary bike at 75% of Max Heart Rate with 30 second maximum effort intervals at minutes 10, 15, and 20.
- STEP 5: Sport-specific aerobic activity and re-introduction of skating:** 15 minutes of low intensity skating. If the facility permits, short track athletes should start with long track skating. The environment should be managed so as to ensure the athlete is not in excessive traffic and that there is minimum risk of falling or colliding with other athletes. The athlete may also attempt basic balance drills, such as gliding in basic position on one leg. If the athlete only has access to a short track facility, he or she should skate around the outside, close to the boards with no traffic on the inside.

- STEP 6:** 30 minutes of skating at 75% of Max Heart Rate with 30 second maximum effort intervals at minutes 10, 15, and 20.
- STEP 7:** Regular off-ice warm-up with high intensity off-ice agility/coordination activities and monitored high intensity off-ice and on-ice workout. See Appendix 1 of SSC Return to Play Guide.
- STEP 8:** Full on-ice practice, including skating in traffic, tactical drills, starts and race simulations once cleared by a physician.
- STEP 9:** Return to unrestricted training and competition.

MEDICAL CLEARANCE

11. Speed Skating Canada's Return to Speed Skating Protocol requires the athlete to consult with a physician at two stages: a) before returning to light aerobic exercise, and b) before resuming full on-ice practice.
12. Nunavut Speed Skating Association agrees with Speed Skating Canada's Return to Speed Skating Protocol and will require the athlete to obtain medical clearance, ideally from a physician familiar with concussions, before permitting the athlete to resume speed skating activity with the Nunavut Speed Skating Association.

HELMETS

13. Nunavut Speed Skating Association strongly recommends replacing a helmet after a significant impact with any hard surface even if no damage is visible so as to ensure skater safety.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF POLICY

The NSSA Board of Directors shall review this Selection Policy on an annual basis.

This Selection Policy was approved by the NSSA Board of Directors on XXXXXX

Original	selection	Policy	Lead
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