THE HEALTHCONNECTION
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APWU Health Plan's Quarterly Newsletter

Concussions In Youth Sports



Keeping children and teens healthy and safe is always a top priority. Whether you are a parent youth sports coach, school coach, school professional, or health care provider it's important to child safety to recognize, respond to, and minimize the risk of concussion or other serious brain injury.

An estimated 3.8 million athletes a year suffer concussion, though the majority are underreported and underdiagnosed, according to the Brain Trauma Foundation. A study published by the American Academy of Pediatrics shows the number of sports-related concussions is highest in high school athletes, but they are significant and on the rise in younger athletes.

Research indicates most children and teens who have a concussion feel better within a couple of weeks. However, for some, symptoms may last for months or longer and can lead to short- and long-term problems affecting how they think, act, learn and feel.

The Sports Concussion Institute breaks down the numbers for all age groups and Safe Kids Worldwide, a nonprofit organization working to help keep kids safe from injuries, analyzed sports-related emergency room injury data for children ages 6 to 19 in 14 sports, including basketball, cheerleading, football and soccer. Here are some of the findings:

- 12% of all emergency room visits involved a concussion (163,670)
- In basketball incidents, 11.5% of girls and 7.2% of boys were diagnosed with concussions
- In soccer, 17.1% of girls and 12.4% of boys suffered concussions
- 5% to 10% of athletes will experience a concussion in any given sports season
- Fewer than 10% of sports-related concussions involve loss of consciousness
- Football is the most common sport with concussion risk for males (75% chance)
- Soccer is the most common sport with concussion risk for females (50% chance)
- 78% of concussions occur during games as opposed to practices

Signs observed by parents or guardians
If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned or moves clumsily
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall or events after hit or fall

Symptoms reported by athletes
- Headache or "pressure" in the head, nausea or vomiting, doesn't "feel right"
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

What should you do if you think your child has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious.They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion. Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

National Safety Council Mission:
http://www.nsc.org/learn/safety-knowledge/Pages/Sports-Concussions.aspx

USDH&HS-Center for Disease Control and Prevention:
https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/youthsports/magnet-a.pdf

Nutri-Guru to the Rescue!

If it were only as simple as the old adage, “An apple a day...” but deciding whether your apple should be natural, organic, farm to table, gluten or GMO free has made picking it a much more complex feat. When it comes to nutrition; sorting through countless options, fad diets, and an endless array of confusing information, can make you wonder, just what “...keeps the doctor away?"

Fortunately, seeking the help of a certified dietician can provide a trusted resource to help navigate pitfalls in a colossal food industry. Not only can they assist in making informed food choices; but in some instances their expertise can help identify specific food allergies and provide preventative guidance for patients who could otherwise develop serious illnesses like diabetes or heart disease.

Studies show that ongoing support from a dietitian does in fact assist in weight loss, maintenance, dietary intervention, and overall better health.

Enroll in the APWU Health Plan's Weight Management Program (at no extra cost) and your visits with an in-network registered dietician/nutritionist are free.



The APWU Health Plan offers members access to our Weight Management Program

At no cost, members are given the following tools and services:

- Initial assessment by phone with a health advocate
- Workbook and toolkit to keep you on track
- Progress calls with your personal wellness coach
- Visits with an in-network registered dietician/ nutritionist
- Decreased risk of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and diabetes

To enroll call (800) 582-1314 or visit our website at:
https://www.apwuhp.com/our-plans/high-option/health-management-programs/weight/



"Take 3" Actions to Fight the Flu

- Vaccinate
- Stop Germs
- Antiviral Drugs if your doctor prescribes them

Flu shots are free when administered by in-network providers.

John L Marcotte

Virtual Visits by Amwell:

A faster, easier way to see a doctor



What is Virtual Visits? Virtual Visits by Amwell is a faster, easier way to see a doctor and is now available to members, 24/7/365! You can have video visits anytime on your smartphone, tablet, or computer. It's easy to use, private, and secure.

Virtual Visits offers:

- Your choice of trusted, U.S. board-certified doctors and therapists
- Peace of mind with a doctor "on call" 24/7 to provide quality care
- Consultation, diagnosis, and prescriptions (when appropriate)

What is the cost? It's free to enroll and doctor visits on Amwell are just a $20 copay, no deductible.

How do I get care?
If you have any questions or need assistance with Virtual Visits by Amwell, please contact our support team by calling 855-818-DOCS (855-818-3627) or email them at support@americanwell.com

What can doctors treat during Virtual Visits? You can meet with a doctor to receive treatment for: colds, flu, fever, rash, abdominal pain, sinusitis, pinkeye, ear infection, migraines, etc.

When Would I Use Virtual Visits? Virtual Visits can be used any time, day or night. It's perfect when your doctor's office is closed, you're too sick or busy to see someone in person, or even when you're traveling.

Telehealth is available in most states, but some states do not allow telehealth or prescriptions. For a full list, visit: http://info.americanwell.com/where-can-i-see-a-doctor-online

Take Time to get a Flu Vaccine

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
- While there are many different flu viruses, a flu vaccine protects against the viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine by the end of October, if possible.
- Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.
- People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to them.
- Children younger than 6 months are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for infants should be vaccinated instead.



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Member Rights and Responsibilities Statement

Members of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) Health Plan have both rights and responsibilities in the management of their healthcare. Management of their healthcare includes encounters with American Postal Workers Union Health Plan associates, and the provider community.

The following outlines our member's rights with the APWU Health Plan:

- Be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity at all times.
- Receive understandable information about APWU programs, services, and contractual relationships in terms and language members understand.
- Receive timely access to covered services and drugs, as applicable.
- Have the privacy of personal health information protected.
- Receive information about the organization, their plan, its network providers and covered services.
- Receive a prompt reply to questions or requests for information.
- Receive a copy of the Member Rights and Responsibilities Statement.
- Receive clear information on how to file a complaint or appeal and to ask us to reconsider decisions we have made.
- Make recommendations, as well as get more information, about APWU Health Plan's member rights and responsibilities policy.
- Know how APWU Health Plan pays in-network and out-of-network healthcare professionals for providing services.
- Participate with healthcare professionals in making decisions about healthcare.
- Have candid discussions of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for health conditions, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
- Receive complete information about diagnosis, evaluation, treatment, and prognosis, or designate another person to receive this information on behalf of the member.
- Know the names and qualifications of healthcare professionals involved in medical treatment.
- Be informed if a health care professional plans to use an experimental treatment or procedure regarding care and to refuse to participate in research projects.

The following outlines our member's responsibilities with APWU Health Plan:

- Become familiar with covered services and the rules to follow to get covered services.
- Provide full disclosure of any other health insurance or prescription drug coverage that the member may have.
- Tell the doctor and other healthcare professionals about current enrollment. Help doctors and other providers by providing them with information, asking questions and following through on care.
- Understand health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals.
- Agree to follow the treatment plan prescribed by their provider and to participate in their care.
- Treat healthcare professionals, staff and others respectfully.
- Pay what is owed.
- Inform APWU Health Plan if the member moves.
- Contact Customer Service for help with questions or concerns.
- Provide complete and accurate information to the best of their ability regarding their health, medications (including over-the-counter and dietary supplement products), and any allergies or sensitivities.
- Inform the provider about any living will, medical power of attorney, or other directive that could affect their care.

