



## **Eye on Safety**

*From the Secretary's Office of Safety*

## **Concussion Awareness**

Heads Up!

Did you know National Concussion Awareness Day is recognized annually on the third Friday of September? This observance was created to raise awareness of concussions on a national scale.

### **What is a concussion?**

A concussion is a form of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt that causes the head and brain to move back and forth rapidly. It is possible to have a concussion due to whiplash, rapid rotation, shaking, or jerking of the head or even the body. On worksites, slips, trips, and falls, along with vehicle collisions often produce injuries that can lead to concussions.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

A concussion may or may not involve a loss of consciousness. You do not have to black out or be knocked out to experience a concussion. Some common signs and symptoms include:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Loss of consciousness
- Headache (or a sensation of pressure in your head)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Seeing stars or lights
- Blurred or double vision
- Slurred speech
- Balance problems
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty remembering
- Confusion, drowsiness, or an incoherent thought process

Symptoms may not be present immediately after the injury but may emerge in the subsequent hours or days. It is therefore important to monitor for symptoms several days following a head injury.

### **How to Manage a Concussion**

Workers who experience symptoms after an injury should alert a supervisor and seek immediate medical attention. It is important to consult with a medical professional on how best to manage a concussion. Someone with a suspected concussion should not be left alone or allowed to drive.

### **Help Prevent Concussions**

- Remove tripping hazards. Make sure walkways and work-spaces are free of clutter, cords, puddles of water, or anything else that can cause a slip, trip, or fall.
- Use proper signage to alert employees to wet or slippery surfaces.
- Clean and organize shelves, storage areas, and work-spaces to avoid falling objects.
- In a warehouse or storage facility, do not climb shelves, and place the heaviest objects on the floor or the lowest possible shelving.
- Wear the proper type of safety footwear to prevent falls if you work in slippery, icy, or rugged terrain.
- Do not stand on chairs, desks, or tables.
- Use caution when working at heights. Know how to use fall protection and fall restraint equipment.
- Ensure proper fit and condition of hard hats and other PPE equipment

Click [here](#) for more information about concussions.