

# ImPACT

## Frequently Asked Questions



Baseline test results are then compared to any post-injury test results. That information is used to determine when a concussed athlete can safely return to play. Please read through the following frequently asked questions regarding baseline testing.

**Q: WHAT IS A Concussion ImPACT TEST?**

**A:** ImPACT Baseline Testing is the first; most widely used, and most scientifically validated computerized concussion evaluation system. An ImPACT test takes approximately 30 minutes and is designed to evaluate and document multiple aspects of an athlete's neurocognitive state, which includes brain processing speed, memory, and visual motor skills.

**Q: WHO CAN ADMINISTER AN ImPACT TEST?**

**A:** The ImPACT test can be administered by any trained personnel. The administrator needs to have taken the test and be familiar with the testing protocol. Administrators can include but are not limited to athletic trainers, physicians, nurses, neuropsychologists, physical therapists, physical therapy aides, psychologists, coaches, and athletic directors.

**Q: WHAT IS BASELINE TESTING?**

**A:** Baseline testing is used to establish a benchmark score when a player is in his or her non-concussed or "normal" state. Ideally this should occur before the athletic season begins. This baseline test is good for up to two years. It should be noted that a baseline test does not evaluate your athlete for a concussion, identify past concussion(s), prevent future concussions or determine if your son or daughter is predisposed to a concussion.

**Q: MY ATHLETE RECENTLY SUSTAINED A CONCUSSION, SHOULD HE OR SHE TAKE PART IN BASELINE TESTING?**

**A:** If your athlete is still recovering from a concussion they should not be given a baseline test. Instead, your child should refrain from any activity that requires exertion or increase in cognitive function which puts a strain on the brain. These activities include physical activity of any kind as well as texting, reading, video games, typing, or internet use.

**Q: WILL I RECEIVE A COPY OF MY ATHLETE'S BASELINE TEST?**

**A:** If your athlete has taken their baseline testing through the A Step aHead initiative, you will not receive a copy of your athlete's test. Baseline tests results are housed in a database that is managed by Dr. Elizabeth Pieroth. Dr. Pieroth is a Board Certified Clinical Neuropsychologist and a Credentialed ImPACT Consultant (CIC) with the NorthShore University HealthSystem Sports Concussion Program. Dr. Pieroth has extensive experience in the evaluation of traumatic

brain injury and sports-related concussion. She has been involved in the assessment of players in the National Hockey League since 1997 and is the Head Injury/Concussion consultant to the Chicago Bears, Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago White Sox, Chicago Fire and Northwestern University.

*If your child sustains a concussion and you would like a copy of your test sent to another physician experienced in treating concussions, please contact Dr. Pieroth's office at (847) 503-4361.*

**Q: MY CHILD HAS TAKEN A BASELINE ImPACT TEST AND HAS NOW SUSTAINED A CONCUSSION. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?**

**A:** If your child sustains a concussion, remove the athlete from play and ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a healthcare professional experienced in evaluating concussions. If for any reason you think your son or daughter may have sustained a blow to the head or body after taking this baseline concussion test, it is strongly recommended that he or she seek medical care from a Primary Care Physician, the Emergency Room, or the clinicians at NorthShore University HealthSystem.

*To set up an appointment for your athlete to be evaluated post-concussion or for information on appropriate healthcare providers in your area, please contact Dr. Elizabeth Pieroth at NorthShore University HealthSystem, with locations in Oak Brook and Glenview at (847) 503-4361.*

**Q: IF MY CHILD SUSTAINS A CONCUSSION, WILL THEIR POST-CONCUSSION TEST BE COVERED BY INSURANCE?**

**A:** Post-injury neurocognitive assessments are covered by most major insurance plans, with the exception of the state of Illinois Medicaid plans. You will need to contact your individual health care provider to verify they accept your insurance carrier.

**Q: WHO SHOULD INTERPRET THE POST-CONCUSSION TEST RESULTS?**

**A:** Many sports medicine clinicians want to learn to interpret the test results and can be trained through a course offered by ImPACT. NorthShore University HealthSystem is an official Certified ImPACT Consultation (CIC) testing location. A CIC is an ImPACT partner with the education, training, and experience that comes with completing the credentialed ImPACT Consultant Program. **To schedule a Post-Concussion test or for assistance finding a CIC testing site near you contact NorthShore University HealthSystem at (847) 503-4361.**

**Q: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE POST-INJURY TEST RESULTS ARE INTERPRETED?**

**A:** If ImPACT results are abnormal, continue to refrain from practice and competition. A second Post-Concussion ImPACT test should be administered once the athlete is asymptomatic. Once scores have returned to baseline level and symptoms have resolved an exertion test should be performed. Please follow the Return to Play (RTP) protocol that has been implemented by your coach or athletic trainer.

For more information contact an Athletico Baseline Testing Professional by emailing [baselinetesting@athletico.com](mailto:baselinetesting@athletico.com).

**REMEMBER:** *ImPACT test results should be used as only one source of information regarding the athlete's level of functioning. Diagnostic or return-to-play decisions should be based on an evaluation by medical personnel in accordance with usual and standard medical practices.*

Head Injury and Concussion Management  
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