



## Psychological aspects of sport-related concussion: An evidence-based position paper

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### ABSTRACT

The field of sport-related concussion (SRC) is evolving quickly, and psychological aspects affecting athletes' recovery and well-being are now recognized as an important component for research and clinical practice. There has been considerable recent emphasis on empirical research into the psychological implications of SRC. This emphasis reflects trends from clinical research that indicate anxiety and mood-related issues may represent the primary symptoms in nearly 30% of concussions. In short, SRC and its psychological aspects is a major issue that influences not only athletes' performance, but also their physical and mental health. The purpose of this position paper is to provide a concise yet comprehensive review of the current state of research and evidence-based practice as it relates to the psychological aspects of SRC. More specifically, we present five postulates that are intended to stimulate discussion among researchers and allied health professionals who are interested in psychological aspects of SRC. Our intent in writing this position paper is to advance this subdiscipline within the area of SRC by discussing areas for growth in theory, research, and practice.

*Lay summary:* Sport-related concussions (SRC) have become a public health issue, however little research has focused on the the psychological aspects of this injury. This position paper identifies five postulates that are intended to stimulate research and practice on psychological aspects of SRC.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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### IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Multidisciplinary concussion care teams should include a sport psychology professional to assist with psychosocial recovery and well-being.
- Identify psychological factors that detract athletes from feeling ready to return to sport following a concussion (e.g., confidence, fear), and work with them to develop coping strategies to assist their return.
- Appropriately trained sport psychology professionals could deliver effective concussion education interventions that involve behavior change techniques.

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