

# Atlanta Cricket League (ACL)

## Concussion Policy – Recreational & Amateur Cricket

**Effective Date:** January 10, 2026

**Approved By:** ACL Board of Directors

**Applies To:** Players, Volunteers, Coaches, League Officials, Board Members, and Other Covered Individuals

### 1. Purpose

Atlanta Cricket League Inc (“ACL”) is committed to protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of all participants. This policy sets out a clear and practical framework for the recognition, management, and return to play following concussion in **recreational and amateur cricket**, where medical resources may not be routinely available.

This policy prioritizes player welfare and adopts a **conservative, safety-first approach**.

### 2. Governing Framework

This policy is **informed by the International Cricket Council (ICC) Concussion Management Guidelines** and has been **adapted for recreational and amateur cricket environments**.

ACL recognizes that concussion management in community sport relies on early recognition, prompt removal from play, and cautious return-to-play decisions rather than on-field medical diagnosis.

### 3. What Is a Concussion

A concussion is a **traumatic brain injury** caused by a blow to the head or body that results in the brain moving rapidly within the skull.

Concussion: - May occur with or without loss of consciousness - Symptoms may appear immediately or be delayed - Cannot be diagnosed by imaging alone - May affect physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep functions

### 4. Common Causes in Cricket

Concussion may occur from, but is not limited to: - Being struck by the ball - Being struck by a bat - Collision with another player - Head contact with the ground or boundary objects

## 5. Recognition and Immediate Action

### If In Doubt, Sit Them Out

The principle **“If in doubt, sit them out” is mandatory** in all ACL matches and training activities.

Any player who experiences or is suspected of experiencing a concussive event **must be immediately removed from play**.

### Authority to Remove a Player

- In most ACL matches, **medical practitioners will not be present**.
- Where no medical practitioner is available, **umpires and team officials must act in the best interests of player welfare**.
- If a medical practitioner is present, their decision regarding removal from play shall be final.

A player suspected of concussion **must not return to play on the same day**.

## 6. Medical Assessment

Players suspected of concussion are **strongly encouraged** to seek assessment by a qualified medical practitioner as soon as practicable.

Formal concussion assessment tools (such as SCAT) may be used **only by appropriately trained personnel**, but are **not required** for ACL recreational play.

The absence of formal testing **must not be used as justification for return to play**.

## 7. Recovery and Return to Play

A player may return to cricket activities only when: - They are **completely symptom-free at rest** - They have completed a **graduated return-to-play process** - They have received **medical clearance by a doctor**, where reasonably practicable

Same-day return to play following suspected or diagnosed concussion is **strictly prohibited**.

## 8. Graduated Return to Play (GRTP)

Return to play must follow a **minimum five-stage graduated process**:

1. **Complete Rest** – Physical and cognitive rest
2. **Light Activity** – Walking or light exercise; no cricket skills
3. **Cricket-Specific Non-Contact Activity** – Batting, bowling, or fielding drills without risk of contact
4. **Full Training** – Normal training activities

## 5. Return to Match Play

Each stage must last **at least 24 hours**.

If symptoms return at any stage: - The player must stop activity immediately - Rest until symptom-free - Resume at the previous successful stage no earlier than the following day

## 9. Youth Players

For players **under 19 years of age**, a **more conservative approach applies**, including: - Longer recovery periods - Mandatory medical clearance prior to return to match play

## 10. Education and Awareness

ACL will make concussion awareness information available to: - Players - Umpires - Team officials

This information will include common symptoms, reporting expectations, and return-to-play requirements.

## 11. Player Responsibility

Players are expected to: - Report symptoms honestly - Comply with removal and return-to-play decisions - Not pressure officials, teammates, or captains for early return

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

## 12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to reflect best practice and updated guidance.