

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.