



## WHAT TO DO IF YOU CRASH AND SUFFER A HEAD IMPACT

We all know that being on two wheels, flowing down the trail and sending it on the good stuff is the best feeling in the world. But we also accept that Mountain Biking comes with its risks; the risk of having an off. Most of the time we can just shrug it off and jump back on our stead for the ride to victory! But what happens if you or one of your party has an off and suffers a head impact? What do you do in that situation? Here is a guide to help you should this ever occur.

1. If you OR one of your party suffers a head impact, stop riding. Make sure the trail is safe and check the following...
2. Ask questions such as; 'What happened? Can you remember coming off? Ask questions that involve memory recall such as; 'What did you have for breakfast'
3. **NOTE: Slow responses** and **difficulty answering questions** can be a result of a concussion. Remember you do not have to lose consciousness to suffer a concussion. Confusion and not remembering the crash (amnesia) are also symptoms of concussion.
4. **REMEMBER:** Symptoms are not always immediate. Symptoms can unravel over the following hours and days.

### Concussion Symptoms:

- Headache
- Temporary loss of consciousness, but not always
- Confusion or sensation of foggy mind
- Amnesia or not remembering the event
- Dizziness or "seeing stars"
- Ringing in the ears (*tinnitus*)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Delayed response to questions
- Appearing dazed or drunk
- Fatigue



## Delayed Concussion Symptoms:

- Concentration and memory complaints
- Irritability and other personality changes
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Sleep disturbances
- Psychological adjustment problems and depression
- Disorders of taste and smell

## Red Flag Symptoms:

Seek immediate emergency care if the following symptoms are displayed:

- Repeated vomiting
- A loss of consciousness that lasts longer than 30 seconds
- A headache that gets worse over time
- Changes in behaviour, such as irritability
- Changes in physical coordination, such as stumbling or clumsiness
- Confusion or disorientation, such as difficulty recognizing people or places
- Slurred speech or other changes in speech
- Seizures
- Vision or eye disturbances, such as pupils that are bigger than normal (dilated pupils) or pupils of unequal sizes
- Lasting or recurrent dizziness
- Obvious difficulty with mental function or physical coordination
- Symptoms that worsen over time
- Large head bumps or bruises on areas other than the forehead in children, especially in infants under 12 months of age

## IF IN DOUBT SIT IT OUT!

1. **If in doubt, sit it out!** Depending on the severity of the symptoms displayed call an ambulance, visit A&E or make an appointment with your GP. Always carry a phone with you to call for help should you need it.
2. Do not drive your car home. Call a friend or family member to come and collect you or get a friend to drive who can legally drive you back.
3. Never ride with the same helmet you crashed in. Some companies will accept your helmet back for research purposes and I believe they offer you a voucher toward a new lid!



## WHEN CAN I RIDE AGAIN?



The standard guideline is **10 days**. 80-90% of uncomplex single concussions are resolved within 10 days. If you are suffering a concussion, you are more likely to suffer a second if you go back to riding too soon, resulting in additional symptoms and a slower return to riding!

Use the time wisely, maybe strip your bike and give it some well deserve love and attention or even start planning some future trips for you and your mates.

When your 10 days are up and IF you are feeling symptom free get out and ride but go slow, once your GP gives you the go ahead. Invite a few mates to come with you and explain your situation before you ride. Keep it under an hour and gage how you feel afterwards.

**10 DAYS  
REST**

On your next ride, pick it up a little more, being sensible, slowly getting yourself back to where you want to be in incremental steps.

## IT'S BEEN 10 DAYS AND I STILL HAVE SYMPTOMS...



Go back to your doctor or A&E and explain the situation again and let them take it from there to refer you to a Neural Specialist.

If you have no joy there, contact us at Pure Body Balance. We work with riders from Beginners to Elite World Cup Riders, covering all aspects of their training from Strength and Conditioning to Nutrition, from Rehabilitation to High Performance Conditioning.

**NOTE:** it is very common to experience other injuries along with concussion that can exacerbate and contribute to your symptoms. For example, whiplash nearly always accompanies a concussion injury. Concussions are found to occur at 70-100G's of force. A whiplashes only need forces of 4.5G's to occur. Whiplash can present with the same symptoms as concussion i.e. headaches, cognitive issues, balance issues, dizziness.

In addition, find a local Clinician or Practitioner trained in:

ELDOA/SOMA Practitioner

CHEK Practitioner level 3 +

CHEK Holistic Lifestyle Coach level 2 +

Osteopath

Chiropractor (*my preference is someone trained in SOT*) or a Physiotherapist





*This is a subject that shouldn't be taken lightly. We all think, 'it won't happen to me', and 'I'll be alright' but it is a realistic risk.*

*Go through these points, be safe, have fun and enjoy the ride!*



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Disclaimer, this document is for information purposes only and should not be used as a tool of diagnosis or treatment.  
Medical advice should always be sought in the case of a head injury or suspected concussion.

