



## The FA release new concussion guidelines

*New concussion guidelines outline clear message – 'If in doubt, sit them out'*

Footballers that sustain a suspected concussion, either during training or in a game, should immediately be removed from the pitch and not allowed to return, until the appropriate short and long-term treatment has been applied.

That is the message at the heart of new guidelines launched today by The FA for managing head injuries at all levels of the game.

Available as both a **free-to-download digital document** and online resource, the new guidance is based on current evidence and best practice from around the world, and includes key information on how a concussion should be managed from the time of injury through to a player's safe return to football.

The advisory guidelines are designed for both the professional game, whilst [County Football Associations](#) will make them available for their respective clubs and leagues in grassroots football.

Dr Ian Beasley, The FA's head of medical services, believes the guidelines will play a crucial role in ensuring the better management and care of head injuries across football in England, thereby making the game safer for more players at every level.

He said: "The paramount priority for The FA is player safety, and so the publication of these concussion guidelines is integral to achieving an unprecedented high level of care and safety for players at all levels. Playing football has been shown to promote good health, and so by making the game safer, we will hopefully increase participation and thereby boost the health of the nation."

The new guidelines were developed in consultation with The FA's Expert Panel on Concussion and Head Injury, which was set-up in April 2015, and tasked with advising the organisation on concussion.

Peter Hamlyn, Chair of the panel and eminent consultant neurological and spinal surgeon, said: "It has been a privilege and honour to be involved with this project and chair the group. Much work remains to be done in the field of concussion, though the panel was unanimous in endorsing these guidelines as reflecting the best and latest understanding of this complex field.

"I thoroughly commend The FA for the commitment and passion they have shown in supporting our work, and we will endeavour to look at reviewing these guidelines on an annual basis."

Dr Willie Stewart, consultant neuropathologist and honorary clinical associate professor at Glasgow's Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, is another on the Expert Panel. He said: "They are a fantastic development from The FA, and are a good example of their commitment to providing a safer game for participants at all levels of football, and hopefully they have the potential to impact on sport in England as a whole.

"The guidelines clearly demonstrate The FA's strong leadership around this issue, and provide clear information on the immediate management of the injury around the simple principle of 'if in doubt, sit them out'."

The guidelines have also been produced with support from some of the game's other stakeholders including the LMA, whose chairman, Richard Bevan, commented. "The League Managers Association is pleased to support The FA's Concussion Guidelines, as the physical wellbeing of football's participants must always be a priority for us all working in the game."

As well as producing the concussion guidelines, the expert panel have also been working on devising appropriate research into the long-term effects of head injury or repeated concussion episodes on the brain. The FA plan to take the appropriate research questions they have identified to FIFA in due course.

## ENDS

**To download The FA's Concussion Guidelines document in full, please [click here](#) or alternatively, please visit [the-fa.com/Concussion](http://the-fa.com/Concussion) to access our online resource.**