



Concussion Policy

The KW Sertoma Speed Skating Club has established a concussion policy in alignment with Speed Skate Canada recommendations. These criteria have been developed to maintain the health of our athletes and to recognize that an athlete's health is more important than participating in the sport of speed skating. The Club recognizes the increased awareness of concussions and their long-term effects and therefore enacts this Policy as a tool to help manage concussed and possibly-concussed athletes and preserve the health of its members.

This policy applies to all athletes and should be enforced by coaches, officials, members and decision-makers of the KW Sertoma Speed Skating Club. The Club adopts and adheres to Speed Skating Canada's Return to Play Procedure which includes both the Return to Speed Skating Protocol and concussion guidelines.

The policy requires **these steps to be followed in order**:

1. During all speed skating events, competitions, and practices sanctioned by the KW Sertoma Speed Skating Club, participants (which include coaches, athletes, parents, officials, and other members) will use their best efforts to:
 - a) Be aware of incidents that may cause a concussion, such as:
 - i. Falls
 - ii. Accidents
 - iii. Collisions
 - iv. Head trauma
 - b) Understand the symptoms that may result from a concussion, such as:
 - i. Headache
 - ii. Dizziness
 - iii. Pressure in the head
 - iv. Nausea
 - v. Poor concentration
 - vi. Amnesia
 - vii. Fatigue
 - viii. Sensitivity to light or noise
 - ix. Irritability
 - x. Poor appetite
 - xi. Decreased memory
 - xii. Just not feeling right
 - c) Notify certified coaches of individuals who have been involved in any of the above incidents and/or exhibit any of the above symptoms. Concussions should not be diagnosed by anyone who is not licensed to do so.
2. Athletes or other individuals who have been involved in an incident that may cause a concussion and who exhibit signs of a concussion shall be removed from the speed skating activity by a certified coach.

3. Following the athlete being removed from the speed skating activity, the athlete's coach, or someone designated by the certified coach, should ensure the following steps are taken:
 - a) Call an emergency number (if the situation appears serious).
 - b) Notify the athlete's parent (if the athlete is a minor) or someone close to the athlete (if the athlete is not a minor).
 - c) Have a ride home arranged for the athlete.
 - d) Isolate the athlete into a quiet, dark room or area.
 - e) Reduce external stimulus (noise, other people, etc.).
 - f) Remain with the athlete until he or she can be taken home.
 - g) Encourage the consultation of a physician.
4. Once the athlete's immediate needs have been met, the athlete's family or the athlete should be directed to Speed Skating Canada's Return to Play Procedure, outlined in the Return to Speed Skating Protocol below in Step 5.
5. **Return to Speed Skating Protocol** - An athlete who has been concussed should only return to speed skating activity by following the steps outlined in Speed Skating Canada's Return to Speed Skating Protocol, as confirmed by a certified coach. An excerpt is provided below, the full reference is available at: <http://www.speedskating.ca/concussions-brain-injuries> .

STEP 1: Complete cognitive and physical rest. Limit school, work and tasks requiring concentration. Refrain from physical activity until symptoms are gone. Once all symptoms are gone, rest for at least another 24-48 hours and consult a physician, preferably one with experience managing concussion, for clearance to proceed to Step 2.

STEP 2: Light aerobic exercise to reintroduce physical activity: 10-15 minutes of low intensity cycling on a stationary bike.

STEP 3: 30 minutes of cycling on a stationary bike at 75% of Max Heart Rate.

STEP 4: 30 minutes of cycling on a stationary bike at 75% of Max Heart Rate with 30 second maximum effort intervals at minutes 10, 15, and 20.

STEP 5: Sport-specific aerobic activity and re-introduction of skating: 15 minutes of low intensity skating. If the facility permits, short track athletes should start with long track skating. The environment should be managed so as to ensure the athlete is not in excessive traffic and that there is minimum risk of falling or colliding with other athletes. The athlete may also attempt basic balance drills, such as gliding in basic position on one leg. If the athlete only has access to a short track facility, he or she should skate around the outside, close to the boards with no traffic on the inside.

STEP 6: 30 minutes of skating at 75% of Max Heart Rate with 30 second maximum effort intervals at minutes 10, 15, and 20.

STEP 7: Regular off-ice warm-up with high intensity off-ice agility/coordination activities and monitored high intensity off-ice and on-ice workout. See Appendix 1.

STEP 8: Full on-ice practice, including skating in traffic, tactical drills, starts and race simulations **once cleared by a physician.**

STEP 9: Return to unrestricted training and competition

6. **Medical Clearance** - Speed Skating Canada's Return to Speed Skating Protocol requires the athlete to consult with a physician at two stages: a) before returning to light aerobic exercise, and b) before resuming full on-ice practice or any speed skating activity with the club. If symptoms persist longer than 7 days, or there is any suspicion of a prolonged recovery, using the guidance of a health care professional, such as a physiotherapist who is trained in concussion rehabilitation, is highly recommended by the club to navigate post-concussion syndrome. The KW Sertoma Speed Skating Club agrees with Speed Skating Canada's Return to Speed Skating Protocol and will require the athlete to obtain medical clearance by following the steps outlined in this policy. Accepted medical clearance forms include a note from the physician in conjunction with sign off from the registered concussion therapist, if applicable.

Club certified coaches must be notified immediately of any concussion taking place outside of a speed skating activity. KW Sertoma Speed Skating Club reserves the right to refuse a skater on the ice at any time if this concussion policy and protocol have not been followed.

Suggested Local Concussion Management Clinics

Vestibular and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (VOR)

55 Erb Street East

Unit 303

Waterloo, Ontario

N2J 4K8

(519) 208-0150