



# **db Orthopedic Physical Therapy, PC**

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## **Baseline Concussion Management Program**

**Why is this necessary?** 1 in 10 young athletes will sustain a sports related head injury during the year. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) says that this will occur in 3.8 million kids between the ages of 5-18. The effects can be devastating especially if the athlete returns to sports and sustains a second injury before they are healed from the first impact. This baseline concussion program is suitable for kids older than 10 years of age and must be performed annually to accurately have objective baseline data.

**What happens after head injury without baseline testing?** Typically if there is a loss of consciousness or a change in cognitive function after a head injury the athlete is taken to an Emergency Room for a medical work-up. This is an essential part of medical management so that a qualified physician can make the appropriate diagnosis. For those injuries in which the symptoms are minimal, an athletic trainer or family physician will typically be involved in the evaluation process and necessary course of action. This is where the problem comes in. Does the physician know objectively the athletes prior level of function before the injury? Without baseline testing, the answer is no.

**What is tested and why?** It has been determined through extensive research that cognitive and balance functions are easily measured and reproducible at a relatively low cost to objectively determine how the brain is working prior to any head injury. This baseline testing is an essential component of any concussion management program and is currently performed at the college and professional sports levels. Comparison to how the brain processes before and after injury can help a physician determine if they are fully healed from the initial impact. This baseline concussion program is suitable for kids older than 10 years of age and must be performed annually to accurately have objective baseline data. Colleges and Universities have adopted these programs because of this recommendation: **NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (CSMAS) April 29, 2010 - "Institutions should record a baseline assessment for each student-athlete prior to the first practice. The same baseline assessment tools should be used post-injury at appropriate time intervals. The baseline assessment should consider one or more of the following areas of assessment. At a minimum, the baseline assessment should consist of the use of a symptoms checklist and standardized cognitive and balance assessments."**

**What happens after my child is registered for the program?** Registration is easily performed in conjunction with a sports league or independently at [www.dborthopt.com/concussion](http://www.dborthopt.com/concussion). The athlete needs to have a consent signed by a parent or guardian before testing is done. The baseline balance test takes approximately 5min and is performed in our office or on-site when coordinated with a sports league. After the balance component is completed, you will be emailed instructions and a voucher code to complete a computer based cognitive test on [www.axonsports.com](http://www.axonsports.com). The cognitive test must be performed in a quiet room with adult supervision to ensure optimal conditions are being met. The test results are kept on-file for future comparison in case a head injury occurs.

**What do I do if a head injury occurs during the year?** The first step is to ALWAYS get out of the game and get immediate medical attention if there are signs and symptoms consistent with a head injury. Within 24-72 hours, you should call our office at 732-747-1262 to schedule post-injury balance and cognitive testing. The results are then faxed to your physician of record for incorporation into an appropriate return to play decision. If the results are not back to pre-injury baseline levels, follow-up testing is recommended every 2-3 days until the injured athlete is back to baseline function.

**What does the program cost?** Individual testing is \$39.95 or if performed in connection with an organized sports league or team, it is discounted to \$24.95 for baseline testing, and unlimited post-head injury testing for up to one year from the date the baseline test was completed.

**How can I learn more about the program?** [www.dborthopt.com/concussion](http://www.dborthopt.com/concussion) has the latest information about baseline concussion testing with sample results, published studies and a news story about the program and its effectiveness. More information can be obtained by sending an email to [concussion@dborthopt.com](mailto:concussion@dborthopt.com) or by calling 732-747-1262.

*We look forward to helping your child prevent the devastating effects of head injury associated with sports and recreational activities.*

## TESTIMONIAL



*"Without the concussion testing that Dr. Bertone offers, I would have begun playing too soon after my injury which possibly could have resulted in more damage to my injury. Taking the right amount of time off is the key to preventing relapses; his testing informs athletes the necessary time off needed to heal and get back out on the field."*

**Brookdale Community College Soccer player  
Devin Hope**