



HOW TO PUT TOGETHER YOUR CONCUSSION HISTORY

One of the first things your doctor will ask you about is your concussion history. Putting together an accurate concussion history is critical so that you and your doctor can decide on the best recovery plan for your needs. An accurate concussion history will give your doctor clues as to how best to treat your symptoms and manage your recovery: coming prepared to your first appointment will help you get on the road to recovery as soon as possible. It can also be a challenge – especially considering that memory problems are a common symptom! Below are some recommended tips from the Concussion Legacy Foundation.

1. START WITH THE DIAGNOSED CONCUSSIONS.

If you've been diagnosed with a concussion before, have as much information about the injury ready as possible. What caused the impact? What symptoms did you experience right after? Did symptoms change as you recovered? All of these questions provide important pieces of information to have on hand. Patterns from previous injuries can be helpful in predicting what recovery might look like.

2. SEVERITY MATTERS.

A lot of people get very worried when they start counting their concussions and realize they have more than they thought. It's important to remember that not all concussions are created equal: the severity of past concussions may be more important than the total number. How long your symptoms lasted is the best indicator: the longer the duration, the greater the severity.

3. WHEN THEY HAPPENED COUNTS TOO.

The interval between injuries is important when looking at the full concussion history picture. Two concussions one week apart is a much different story than two concussions a year apart, even if they are of similar severity. Putting them on a timeline is a helpful way to easily see how they cluster, and can help provide background for developing an appropriate return to activity and long-term concussion management plan with your doctor.

4. DON'T FORGET THE UNDIAGNOSED CONCUSSIONS.

Just because a doctor never made a diagnosis, it doesn't mean a concussion didn't happen. After you've recounted your diagnosed concussions, take a look at the symptoms of a concussion and try to remember instances where you felt any symptoms after a hit to the head. It's not uncommon for estimates to increase after reading the definition of a concussion. Remember: Dings and bell ringers count.