

ON-PITCH HEAD INJURY CHECKLIST

- 1** Red Flags & Observable Signs
 - 2** Consciousness & Responsiveness
 - 3** Cervical Spine Assessment
 - 4** Coordination & Oculomotor Screening
 - 5** Memory & Cognitive Assessment
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These pocket cards do not represent a tool to diagnose traumatic brain injury and do not replace appropriate clinical exams. They accompany the UEFA brochure for on-pitch head injury assessment and provide guidance when evaluating a player for a potential traumatic brain injury.

If **any** of the steps described on these cards produce positive findings, substitutions and appropriate emergency care **must be initiated immediately.**

If the player continues, **monitor them closely** and remove them at first doubt



1 Red Flags & Observable Signs

- Suspected loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsion
- Neck pain or midline tenderness
- Weakness, tingling or burning in limbs
- Double vision
- Severe or worsening headache
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Increasing agitation, restlessness or combativeness
- Vomiting
- Unstable on feet

Remove from play & continue emergency care if any of these signs are present.



Also look for observable signs:

lying motionless, confusion, vacant look, clutching head, disturbed balance, impact seizure.

2 Consciousness & Responsiveness

A
Alert

Alert and conscious

V
Verbal

Responds to
verbal stimulus

P
Pain

Responds to
painful stimulus

U
Unresponsive

Unresponsive to any
form of stimulus



**Remove from play if
anything less than alert**
(even if they recover later).

3 Cervical Spine Assessment

Check for:



Neck pain at rest
or tenderness on
palpation



Full, **pain-free** active
range of motion
($\geq 45^\circ$ rotation both sides)



Normal limb
strength and
sensation

Remove from play if any are
abnormal, mechanism suggests
risk or distracting injuries exist.



4 Coordination & Oculomotor Screening



Coordination:

Finger-to-nose test
(eyes open & closed,
both hands).



Oculomotor:

Eye tracking,
side-to-side
and up-down.



Watch for **nystagmus**,
double vision,
dizziness, fogginess,
any type of discomfort.



Remove from play if
atypical finding in
any of the above.

5 Memory & Cognitive Assessment

Engage in conversation & ask Maddocks questions:

- What venue are we at today?
- Which half is it now?
- Who scored last in this match?
- What team did you play last week?
- Did your team win the last game?

Also assess **recall** (e.g. repeat 5-10 words) and engage player in conversation.

Check for **instability, dizziness** or **light-headedness** when standing.

Remove from play if any abnormal responses or atypical findings.



Final Decision

In case of any positive findings,
REMOVE THE PLAYER
from the match and provide
appropriate care.

Even if all steps are normal,
**remove the player if you
suspect a concussion.**

Be **extra cautious** with <18s and
players with previous concussion
(especially within the last 12 months).

If the player continues to play,
monitor them closely
and remove them at first doubt.