

## **Second Impact Syndrome**

Second impact syndrome occurs as a result of rapid swelling of the brain following a second head impact occurring before the symptoms of a previous concussion have resolved. This second impact may be relatively minor, even seemingly insignificant, and in some cases may not even involve a blow to the head. A slap to the back or chest bump may create enough force to snap the head back and create acceleration and deceleration forces on an already compromised brain. It is more common in patients 18 and under.

Even with the second blow the patient may not lose consciousness and only appear shaken. They can even leave the field of play under their own power. However within seconds to minutes their condition will rapidly worsen, often losing consciousness leading to coma, dilated pupils, loss of eye movement and respiratory failure. This is a life-threatening condition and has a 50% mortality rate.

Care must be given within approximately 5 minutes by dramatic life-saving measures performed in an emergency care facility. The best management is to prevent it from occurring. Return to any activity decisions must be made with care and honest communication on all sides.

Description above is from Prentice WE: *Essentials of Athletic Injury Management*, 8ed, New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 2010.

Preston Plevretes Story

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0xJT53SZqQ>