

## Treatment for the Unconscious Athlete

### Reasons for Unconsciousness:

May include the following: concussion, head injury, diabetic coma, seizure, heat stroke, excessive blood loss, heart condition

### First Treatment Priority [Primary Survey]

#### **Airway**

- head tilt
- modified chin lift if neck injury is suspected

#### **Breathing**

- look, listen and feel for air escaping from victim

#### **Circulation**

- check pulse
- look for normal color to skin (not pale or blue) or check skin temp

**Remove face mask only from football player**

**Activate Emergency Calling System as soon as possible**

### Second Treatment Priority [Secondary Survey]

#### **Head to Toe Survey**

##### **Look and Feel for**

- Deformity
- Open wounds
- Unconscious
- Swelling

##### **Check Pupils**

- Response to light
- Equality
- Dilation

##### **Check Head, Ears, Eyes, and Nose**

- Depressions
- Deformity
- Secretions from the ears or nose

#### **Determine mechanism of injury**

### Notations

- The athlete may sustain a head injury and not suffer immediate loss of consciousness- an expanding lesion may cause unconsciousness at a later time.
- You must always consider the possibility of cervical fracture or spinal cord injury. **DO NOT MOVE ATHLETE WITHOUT PROPER EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES.**
- If athlete is a football player, do not remove helmet unless absolutely necessary. Remove face mask first. As last resort follow guidelines for removal of both helmet and shoulder pads as a unit.
- When the athlete is face down and not moving is the most dangerous time.
- Should the athlete be cleared to go home, a standardized form for head injuries will be sent home with the athlete. All instructions and pertinent information, i.e. doctors' name and telephone numbers, should be completed on the form prior to the release.
- Review and follow the guidelines established by your certifying agency as established for your level of training.