



OHSAA WRESTLING BULLETIN

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HNC Protocol for Health-Care Providers, Coaches and Officials (this primer has been made available to Health-Care Providers and H.S. Wrestling Coaches)

To minimize the risk of injury, additional injury time will be given to a wrestler for the evaluation of a suspected head, neck, cervical column and/or nervous system (“HNC”) injury when an appropriate health-care provider (assigned by the host school) is present for the event (Please review Rule 8-2-4).

- An “appropriate health-care provider” is defined as a M.D., D.O. or ATC (certified athletic trainer).
- Wrestling officials are instructed to meet with the appropriate health-care provider prior to the event to ensure that HNC extended injury time is understood and properly administered. If the official neglects to review HNC protocol with the appropriate health-care provider, the appropriate health-care provider is encouraged to touch base with the official for HNC injury time protocol review.
- The appropriate health-care provider is the only person authorized to request extended injury time for evaluating suspected HNC injuries. Coaches and officials are not authorized to request extended HNC injury time.
- If an appropriate health-care provider is not present at the event, suspected HNC injuries are governed by regular injury time (1½ minutes maximum).
- If the official observes signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion anytime during competition, he/she is obligated by **state law** to terminate the match and initiate concussion protocol. The afflicted wrestler cannot return to competition on the same day of the removal. The wrestler cannot return to competition (in a multi-day event) until assessed and cleared (by written authorization) by a physician (M.D. or D.O.) or other licensed health-care providers authorized by the school or school district governing body.
- The appropriate health-care provider initiates the extended HNC injury time request to the match official who will instruct the time-keeper that HNC injury time has been authorized.
- The allotted time for suspected HNC injury evaluation is 5-minutes (maximum). HNC injury time is inclusive of any regular injury time that may have elapsed before extended HNC injury time was requested.
- At the conclusion of the HNC evaluation, the appropriate health-care provider determines if the wrestler can return to competition or should be removed from further competition.
- Upon the expiration of the 5-minute HNC extended injury time, the wrestler must immediately return to competition or default the match depending on the results of the HNC evaluation.
- At any time during a match (including the HNC evaluation), if the appropriate health-care provider observes signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion, the match will immediately terminate, and concussion protocol initiated.
- A coach or an official cannot overrule the appropriate health-care provider’s decision that the wrestler cannot return to competition.
- If the appropriate health-care provider decides a wrestler can continue, the coach may overrule that decision and default the match.
- Coaching may take place during an HNC evaluation (coaches should be encouraged to permit the health-care provider conduct the HNC evaluation without distractions).
- If a wrestler returns to competition and a second HNC event occurs in the same match, the match is terminated by default. If the second HNC event occurs in a subsequent match, the wrestler may continue the match if cleared by the appropriate health-care provider.
- Extended HNC injury time cannot be used to evaluate non-HNC injuries (e.g., shoulder, knee, etc.).

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