Educating coaches about concussion in sports: evaluation of the CDC's "Heads Up: concussion in youth sports" initiative.

Covassin T, Elbin RJ, Sarmiento K.

Source

Michigan State University, Department of Kinesiology, East Lansing, MI 48824, USA. covassin@msu.edu

Abstract

BACKGROUND:

Concussions remain a serious public health concern. It is important that persons involved in youth sports, particularly coaches, be made aware and educated on the signs and symptoms of concussion. This study assessed the perceptions of youth sport coaches who have received the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" materials in preventing, recognizing, and responding to concussions.

METHODS:

A 22-item survey was developed with questions pertaining to demographics, awareness of sports-related concussion, and the usefulness of the CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" initiative and materials. A total of 340 youth sport coaches completed the survey, for a response rate of 34.0%.

RESULTS:

All youth sport coaches reported having the "Heads Up" materials for approximately 6 months before completing the survey. Seventy-seven percent of youth sports coaches reported being better able to identify athletes who may have a concussion, with 50% reported having learned something new about concussion after reviewing the materials. Sixty-three percent of youth sport coaches viewed concussions as being more serious, while 72% of coaches reporting that they are now educating others on concussion.

CONCLUSION:

The "Heads Up" materials demonstrated that youth sports coaches' were able to appropriately prevent, recognize, and respond to sports-related concussions after reviewing the materials. Future studies should concentrate on evaluating the impact of concussion policies, laws and media coverage on coaches' awareness and prevention, recognition, and response to concussions using a rigorous design including a control group.