

CATT—A concussion toolkit for health practitioners

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Concussion, also known as mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), has received enormous attention both in the media and the scientific literature. Concussion continues to be an under-recognized, under-diagnosed and under-treated medical condition requiring both physical and mental rest to recover.


CATT, the new Concussion Awareness Training Toolkit for Health Practitioners, was developed with the goal of improving patient care throughout the province. The short- and long-term effects of concussion can vary from person to person and can greatly affect quality of life. The long-term effects of concussion are often not recognized early enough to prevent post-concussion syndrome and permanent brain damage. A significant percentage of professional hockey and football players, as well as high school athletes, with previously reported concussions or other head-related injury were found to have reported an impact on their social and professional lives including difficulties at work, attending school, playing sports and other simple activities such as riding stationary bicycles or lifting weights (Ackery, Provvidenza, & Tator, 2009).



Figure 1: www.cattonline.com

Based upon established international principles, the aim of CATT is to standardize concussion recognition, diagnosis, treatment and management. CATT features a learner-directed online training module supplemented with diagnostic tools (SCAT3, Child-SCAT3) and links to clinical resources, patient handouts, journal articles, related websites and concussion videos. CATT is available online at www.cattonline.com

CATT is currently undergoing a two-pronged evaluation. Part 1 of the evaluation is looking at changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices among physicians and nurses following completion of the CATT tutorial and access to the tools and links. Part 2 of the evaluation looks at changes in family experiences when attending the emergency department at the British Columbia Children's Hospital with a head-injured child. Results will be available in late fall 2013.

Good concussion management may decrease the risk of brain damage and potentially reduce health care costs related to long-term health issues. Phase 2 of CATT for coaches, parents and athletes is currently in development. 

Acknowledgement

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About the Author



Dr. Shelina Babul has been with the BC Injury Research and Prevent Unit for the past 13 years and is involved in various injury prevention strategies and initiatives. She focuses primarily on sport and recreational evidence-based research development, with a particular specialization in the recognition, treatment and prevention traumatic brain injury/concussion. She is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, UBC, an Investigator with the Child & Family Research Institute, Chair of the BC Concussion Advisory Network (BC CAN), and Co-chair of the BC Sport and Recreation Injury Prevention Advisory Committee.

Reference

Ackery, A., Provvidenza, C., & Tator, C. (2009). Concussion in hockey: Compliance with return to play advice and follow-up status. *Can. J. Neurol. Sci.*, 36(2), 207-12.