



## Optimized Concussion Management

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Bearden High School offers an innovative program for our student athletes. The program is called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) and it is a computerized exam that athletes take prior to the athletic season. This establishes a neurocognitive baseline of the student athlete's brain function for "high risk" sports (football, soccer, basketball, wrestling, volleyball). If the athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during competition, they re-take the exam to help determine the extent of the injury and when the injury has healed. The system is utilized throughout collegiate and professional sports and is considered the "Gold Standard" in recognizing and managing head injuries.

The exam takes about 20-30 minutes and is non-invasive. Testing is proctored by the athletic trainer on-site at BHS, usually in the library. The program is basically set-up as a "video-game" format. It essentially obtains a preseason physical of the brain and its cognitive abilities. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration.

We highly encourage student athletes and their families to take advantage of their baseline ImPACT data. This baseline service is a benefit provided to KCS families free of charge through the collaboration of KCS and Knoxville Orthopaedic Clinic (KOC). If a concussion is suspected, the BHS athletic trainer can easily facilitate an appointment with one of two KOC primary care sports medicine physicians, who have received special training in concussion management and interpreting the ImPACT test in adolescents. The test is re-taken in clinic and the information used by the physician to form an individualized plan to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe, as well as determine whether any temporary academic accommodations or concussion therapy may be needed to reduce stress and facilitate full recovery. To many student athletes, these services are a source of great relief while they undergo the healing process.

Per Tennessee law, only a medical doctor (MD) with concussion training, clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training, or osteopathic physician (DO) may manage and provide return to play clearance for a minor with a concussion. While families can choose to work with any provider with the above credentials, we recommend our skilled KOC ImPACT trained physicians as they have access to your child's individualized baseline data and are uniquely positioned to provide the safest and most thorough avenue for assessment, management, and return timeline.

The ImPACT program gives us the best available information on preventing long term cognitive deficits that can occur with multiple concussions. Bearden High School Administration, Coaching, and Athletic Training Staff work very hard to keep your child's health and safety at the forefront of the High School athletic experience. If you have any questions regarding this program, please feel free to contact me at (865) 680-7960 or [nicole.medina@orthotennessee.com](mailto:nicole.medina@orthotennessee.com).

Sincerely,

**Nicole J. Medina MS, LAT, ATC**

Athletic Trainer

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