CONCUSSION 101

AS CONCUSSION AWARENESS GROWS, these injuries are no longer dismissed as simple 'head bumps' or 'bell-ringers.' Help protect young athletes by learning about concussion symptoms, care, and prevention.

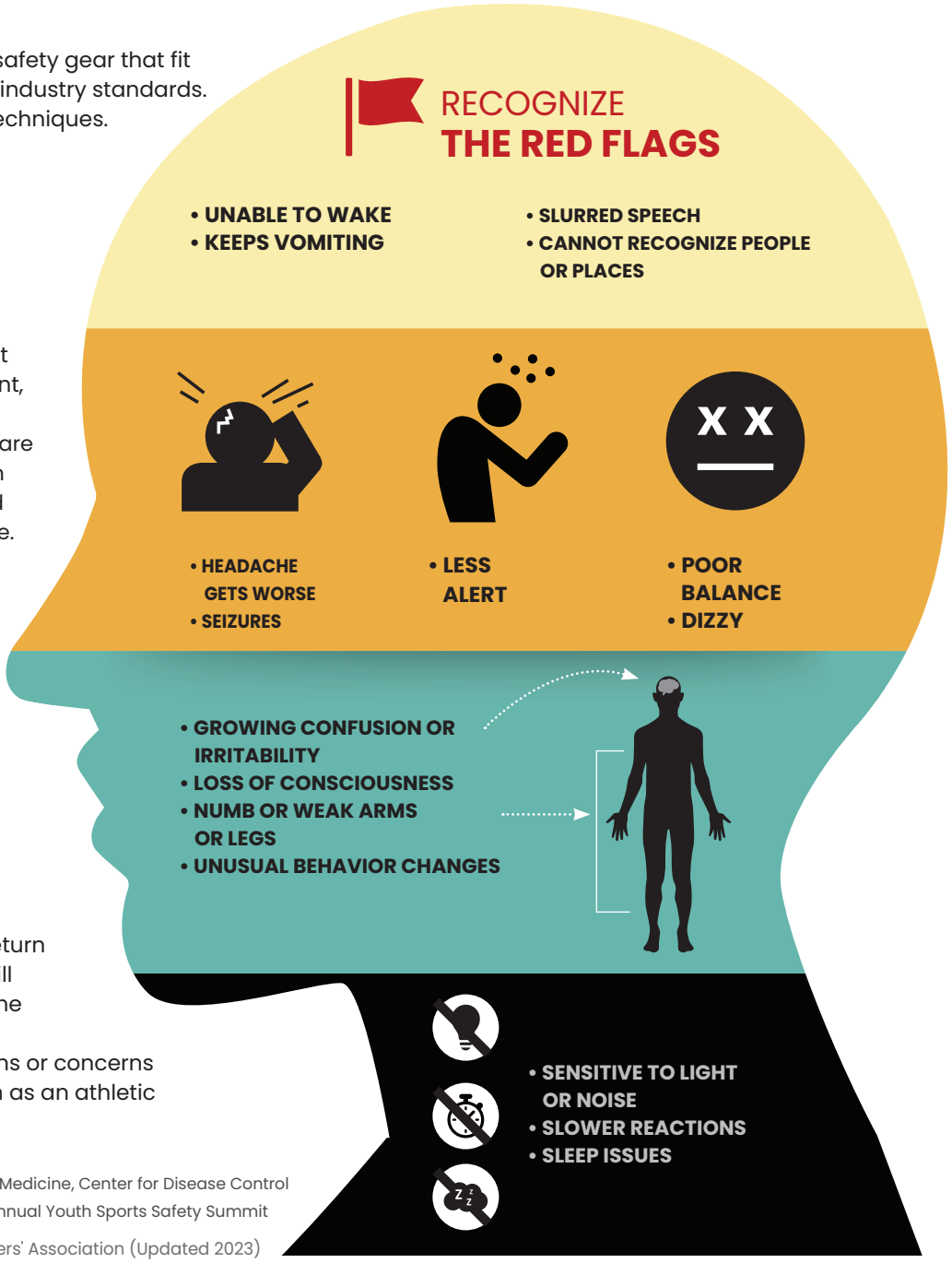
- A concussion is a trauma-related change in mental status, with or without loss of consciousness.
- A bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or a hit to the body, can make the head and brain move rapidly back and forth.
- Signs and symptoms may appear at once or go unnoticed for days or even weeks after injury.

STAYING SAFE ON THE FIELD

- Use sport-specific helmets and safety gear that fit properly and are refurbished to industry standards.
- Follow safety rules and correct techniques.
- Show good sportsmanship.

YOU HAVE A CONCUSSION - WHAT'S NEXT?

- **Report symptoms:** If you suspect a concussion, tell a coach, parent, or athletic trainer.
- **Seek assessment:** Only a healthcare professional skilled in concussion care can diagnose the injury and decide when return to play is safe.
- **Rest, then ease into activity:** Rest for the first 24 to 48 hours, then gradually resume activities. Daily life with mild symptoms is OK, but take care not to make symptoms worse.
- **Allow time to heal:** A second concussion before recovery can cause lasting problems or, rarely, death.
- **Start slowly:** After a doctor or athletic trainer clears activity, return gradually. The athletic trainer will help create a safe plan to resume play step by step.
- **Ask for guidance:** Share questions or concerns with a healthcare provider, such as an athletic trainer or physician.



References: NATA, Sanford Orthopedic Sports Medicine, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Heads Up Concussion, Fifth Annual Youth Sports Safety Summit

Infographic from the National Athletic Trainers' Association (Updated 2023)