



NYFL – PLAYER SAFETY INFORMATION

The NYFL has developed this document to provide parents and athletes with information regarding league measures to enhance player safety.

We want the players to have the best experience possible while learning the fundamentals of the game and having fun. As injuries cannot be completely prevented in any sport or activity, the desire of the NYFL is that the risks will be reduced, and if an injury does occur it will be managed quickly and appropriately.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) provides a significant amount of data and information regarding concussions and other injuries which can be viewed at: www.cdc.gov/headsup/

The NYFL addresses safety through:

- Education
- Practice
- Equipment
- Rules
- Injury Protocol
- Communication

Education:

- All Team General Managers and Coaches must complete concussion awareness training.
- All individuals undergoing training must pass an annual certification exam.
- All certifications are kept with the team and are valid for the duration of the season.
- Training and recertification for all General Managers and Coaches is done on a yearly basis.

Practice:

USA Football studies show leagues that adhere to Heads Up techniques and reduced full contact practice time had 76% fewer injuries, 34% fewer concussions in games and 29% fewer concussions in practices.

- NYFL franchises are limited to no more than 3 contact events per week which includes games.
- Certain head-on blocking and tackling drills have been disallowed and a reduction in full-contact practice time is mandated.
- In place of the full speed contact drills, coaches will focus on the HEADS UP techniques to ensure proper mechanics for blocking and tackling, as well as safe play.

Equipment: Helmets.

- The lifetime of a football helmet is 10 years. A helmet older than 10 years cannot be recertified.
- Helmets should be reconditioned every 2 years during that 10 year life-span. The maximum number of reconditioning's for helmets is 3.

Reconditioning means:

- The helmet is inspected for cracks, deterioration and other internal defects, any deteriorated padding or defective parts are replaced.
 - Helmets are recertified per NOCSAE standards.
 - The individual franchises are responsible for ensuring the proper maintenance and/or replacement timeframe for each helmet.
 - The NYFL recommends, but does not require, the use of 5-star rated helmets. These are the newest technology helmets providing maximum safety.
- **Athletes SHOULD NOT wear anything that comes between the player's head and the helmet padding. No skull-caps, do-rags or hats. Anything that allows the helmet to twist, move or slide is an improper fit. The helmet padding should always be in direct contact with the player's head.**

Rules: The NYFL has taken measures to address contact to the head in its rules.

Unintentional helmet-to-helmet contact (intent is determined by the officials). Personal foul and 15 yard penalty.

Intentional helmet-to-helmet contact (intent is determined by the officials):

- 1st Offense – Offending player is removed from the game for 1 play. Personal foul and 15 yard penalty.
- 2nd Offense – Offending player is removed from the game for the remainder of the half. Personal foul and 15 yard penalty.
- 3rd Offense – Offending player is ejected from the game. Personal foul and 15 yard penalty. At this point MHSAA rules are followed. These dictate that any player ejected from a game is also suspended from the following game.

These rules apply to all players individually.

Injury Protocol:

Any player reporting an injury to sideline personnel needs to be evaluated prior to returning to a game or practice.

- Any player leaving the field, under his/her own power, without assistance, can return to practice or gameplay if the injury is determined to be minor by the on-site medical personnel or franchise staff.
- Any player requiring assistance to leave the field of play after any injury, will require a written authorization from a doctor allowing the player to return to practice and gameplay. The player cannot return to active status without a doctor's authorization.

Communication:

- League policy requires Emergency Medical Personnel to be on site at every game, this insures that players will be given immediate care in the case of serious injury.
- Parents and Athletes are required to review and sign the USA Heads Up Parent & Athlete Concussion Information Sheet.
- Parent notification of injury and clearance is recommended.