



WUMA Concussion Guidelines

Last Updated 13/08/2025

(Intended for Classes, Gradings & Competitions)

Based on the FA's Concussion Guidelines (recognised as the leading UK standard in sports concussion management, adapted for martial arts).

1. Key Rule – *If in doubt, sit them out*

If a student gets a knock to the head, a strong jolt (including body shots that snap the head back), or falls and bangs their head, and you suspect concussion, stop them straight away. No one with suspected concussion returns to training, sparring, or competition (on the same day).

2. Signs to Look For

What you might see:

- Dazed or vacant look
- Unsteady on feet
- Confusion or slow to respond
- Holding their head
- Loss of consciousness (even briefly)
- Vomiting

What they might say they feel:

- Headache or pressure in head
- Dizziness
- **Blurred or double vision**
- Feeling "foggy" or not right
- Problems seeing or concentrating
- Sensitivity to light or noise

3. Red Flags – Call 999 Immediately

- Worsening headache
- Repeated vomiting
- Seizure or fit
- Slurred speech
- Weakness or numbness
- Severe neck pain



- Unusual or sudden behaviour changes

4. What To Do

1. Stop them immediately (no same-day return).
2. Monitor closely for 24 hours (do not leave them alone).
3. At WUMA competitions, a medical professional is always available to assess any suspected head injury on-site and provide initial medical advice.
4. After the event, follow up with GP, NHS 111, or A&E (as advised).
5. Record the incident in your club or event log.

5. Returning Safely

Recovery takes time and depends on being completely symptom-free before moving on.

First 24–48 hours: Rest (light daily activity is fine if it doesn't make symptoms worse). Then follow these stages, spending at least 24 hours symptom-free at each stage before progressing. If symptoms return, drop back one stage and rest for a further 24 hours before trying again.

Stage 1 (Day 2–3): Light exercise (walking, gentle cycling) – no contact.

Stage 2 (Day 4–5): Martial arts drills (no head contact).

Stage 3 (Day 6–13): Controlled sparring (body only).

Stage 4 (Day 14+): Full training including permitted head contact (only after 14 consecutive symptom-free days since the injury).

Stage 5 (Day 21+): Competition or grading (only after a minimum of 21 days post-injury and still symptom-free).

Minimum return times:

- Head contact training: Not before 14 days symptom-free.
- Competition: Not before 21 days post-injury and symptom-free.
- Under 18s: Must take extra care and may require extended recovery periods.

6. Everyone's Role

- **Referees/Instructors:** Spot it, stop it, record it.
- **Parents/Carers:** Watch for symptoms at home and get medical help if needed.



- **Students:** Speak up if you feel unwell (hiding symptoms can make things worse).

Disclaimer:

This guidance is intended to support safe practice within WUMA clubs and events. It does not replace medical advice, and in all cases of suspected concussion, medical assessment should be sought.