**Information for Parents and MSD Student-Athletes**

**From the MSD Athletic Training Department**

MSD staffs 2 full-time licensed and certified athletic trainers (ATC’s) to provide healthcare services to all PIAA student-athletes(grades 7-12). These services include, but are not limited to, injury prevention, evaluation/diagnosis, emergency injury management, treatment of injuries/conditions, rehabilitation programs, return-to-play decisions/protocols, concussion management, ImPact baseline/post-injury testing, communication with physicians, advising parents/athletes/coaches regarding nutrition/hydration/hygiene, and educating parents/athletes/coaches on injury prevention, concussion awareness, and maximizing performance.

* Your ATC’s are
  + Daniel Kropf [kropfd@muhlsdk12.net](mailto:kropfd@muhlsdk12.net) 484-955-9319
  + Ashley Care [carea@muhlsdk12.net](mailto:carea@muhlsdk12.net) 484-955-9296
* Feel free to contact us at the email address or phone number above (call or text) with any questions/concerns about student-athlete health.
* All Student-athletes must have a PIAA physical dated after 6/1 in order to participate in MSD Athletics
* State laws have been passed that affect how your child’s concussion must be handled. If the ATCs have evaluated your child and believe him/her to have sustained a concussion, they will call you (from the information you provide on your child’s physical forms/emergency card) and fill you in on their findings and recommendations. The law mandates that any athlete with a concussion be seen by a physician, and thus a note guiding their care must be turned in to the ATCs after the physician visit. The physician has the option to direct that “upon cessation of symptoms the athlete may begin a 5 day return-to-play (RTP) program at the ATCs supervision/direction”. If a note clears an athlete the day of symptom cessation, a 5 day RTP program will begin that day, but the athlete will not be cleared for full competition until he/she completes the program. The RTP program is widely accepted as the best practice for adolescent athletes. Your child may require academic accommodations as well as physical limitations in order to heal quickly and fully, and we therefore recommend you have them seen by a doctor trained in concussion management in order to have these accommodations properly placed and noted for the district. Your athlete may also be instructed to stay home vs attending practices/games, in order to avoid prolonging symptoms.
* ImPact baseline testing is performed on athletes in 9th-12th grade who participate in a collision or contact sport for Muhlenberg School District. Permission slips for baseline testing are included in the physical packet. This baseline (and any post-injury testing) is only useful to a physician who is trained in its use as part of a return-to-play protocol, and is therefore only needed if a parent/guardian plans to take his/her child to one of these physicians. ImPact testing is not a sole diagnostic indicator – concussions are diagnosed or ruled out based on a **comprehensive** clinical evaluation. Baseline tests will be performed every 2 years.
* **The Muhlenberg Sports Medicine staff uses the following graduated return-to-play protocol:**
* Day 1: Full Day of normal cognitive activities and walking at school without return of signs or symptoms. Introduce light aerobic exercise –15-20 minutes on stationary bike, no weight lifting, resistance training, or any other exercises.
* Day 2: Moderate aerobic exercise – 30-45 minutes of conditioning running, calisthenics, and sport- specific running patterns/grid exercises.
* Day 3: Non-contact training drills – full uniform, no live play, may begin weight lifting, resistance training, and other exercises that do not involve contact to body or head.
* Day 4: Non-contact practice and normal training activities.
* Day 5: Clearance to participate in full competition/physical education classes.
* The athlete will be evaluated and will retake the ImPact test if their MD/DO requests it and is trained in its interpretation. Once an athlete has completed the entire protocol successfully, they will be released to participate in sports competition and all Muhlenberg physical education classes. **If concussion symptoms recur during the graduated return-to-play protocol, the student athlete will return, at a minimum, to the previous level of activity that caused no symptoms.**
* All ATCs work under the supervision of a physician, and are required to have orders from that physician that guide their daily operations. Our supervising/team physician is Commonwealth Orthopedic Associates – They are committed to providing top-notch healthcare to all MSD athletes and go out of their way to accommodate special circumstances.
* **MSD requires that any athlete who is seen by a physician for an injury/condition (visit other than a routine well-child) during their sport season provide a note from that physician that includes the following info prior to being permitted to resume play: date of exam, diagnosis, limitations on play/practice (if any), clearance, or clearance at ATCs discretion.** Any notes will be shared with the school nurse by the ATCs to ensure continuity of care. Notes should be provided directly to the AT, or faxed “attention to Trainer Ashley” or “Trainer Dan” at 610-921-7922.
* The ATCs are here to ensure your child gets the best possible healthcare while participating in Muhlenberg Athletics, and their decisions are based solely on the wellbeing of each student-athlete. It is in the athlete’s best interest to see the AT as soon as an injury occurs so that steps can be taken to limit the initial and secondary effects of injury, and treatment can be initiated to speed the healing process, along with rehabilitation to further address any underlying reasons the injury occurred. **The ATCs are not here to keep your child from participating in their sport**.
* If an AT is not available in the athletic training room please seek them out using the white board by the door. The white board shows which practices/games we are covering.
* Any athlete who fails to participate in PE or strength class due to an injury may NOT participate in any athletic activity that same day. The same rule applies to any athlete who sees the nurse during the school day and is sent home as a result of the nurse’s findings and recommendations. It is part of the ATCs duties to communicate any limitations due to injury to the nurse and PE teachers to ensure that the same level of activity is undertaken in both PE and athletics later that day.