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## Head injury prevention program offered through NYSIR

**Overview:** The New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal (NYSIR) offers member school districts a free program to help them manage risks from scholastic sports, including the risk of head injuries. This comprehensive program provides improved protection to NYSIR members' student athletes and increases the knowledge of key district professionals. The program includes:

- Cognitive baseline and post-concussion testing of student athletes.
- Educational seminars in head injury identification.
- Educational seminars in controlling athletic risk management exposures.
- Information gathering on the composition of athletic surfaces for further research.

**Cost:** The program is free to all NYSIR member school districts. Other school districts must pay for these services. NYSIR knows of no other insurer that provides this service at no cost.

**Proactive cognitive testing:** NYSIR works with ImPACT Applications to conduct baseline cognitive testing every two years to evaluate student athletes who compete in 11 varsity and JV contact sports. The program will also pay for and require post-concussion testing of any students whose injuries subject them to school district concussion protocols. Tests done after suspected concussions help clinical professionals compare students' cognitive abilities after injuries to results from baseline tests and then make decisions on whether students may return to competition. The results also aid in developing plans for return to learning. Testing is web-based and is administered in computer labs or other designated areas in subscriber districts.

The program provides testing for athletes in: football; baseball; softball; cheerleading; field hockey; wrestling; and men's and women's basketball, diving, hockey, lacrosse, and soccer.

**Educational seminars:** NYSIR-sponsored seminars in head injury identification and in controlling other athletic risk management exposures will be delivered regionally and will be supplemented by educational video segments that will be available 24/7 at [nysir.org](http://nysir.org).

**Head injury identification:** The program provides funding to allow school districts' concussion team members and certified athletic trainers to attend educational seminars focused on concussion awareness, recognition, and response. Neurologists, sports medicine specialists, and other medical professionals will conduct these sessions.

**Controlling athletic risk exposures:** Other risk management seminars will focus on broader athletic topics and means to control these exposures. These seminars will target school administrators, athletic directors, coaches, school nurses, and physical education instructors.

**Athletic surfaces:** NYSIR risk management staff will also collect data from the surfaces of member school districts' athletic fields. This data will be analyzed with the goal of developing future insights on other aspects of managing head injury risks.

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