



Signs of Concussion and How to Test for It

Observable signs in the Concussed:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets an instruction
- Speaks slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can not recall events prior to hit or fall

Self-reported Symptoms of the Concussed

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Difficulty paying attention
- Confusion

How to Test for Concussion

The Stick Drop Test

1. Have the subject sit with their elbow and forearm on a desk.
2. The examiner then holds a yardstick above the subject's hand. The subject should hold their fingers in a pinching shape loosely around the yard stick.
3. Without alerting the subject the examiner should drop the yardstick. The subject must try and grab the yardstick as fast as they can.
4. Record the distance on the yardstick and repeat the test twice more to determine an average.
5. Use the baseline average to test against scores acquired from the subject after possible head trauma.

Lemons & Limes

A relatively simple test to tell if the subject has suffered a concussion is to see whether they can smell the difference between a lemon and a lime, or between coffee and chocolate.

Tapping

1. Tap the bridge of the patients nose.
2. They will begin to blink, but should stop after 2-3 blinks.
3. After more than 3 blinks the subject is considered concussed.

Word Finding

1. Ask the subject to think of as many words as they can in 60 seconds.
2. The average person can come up with 14 (plus or minus 5).
3. If the subject comes up with 9 or fewer words, this indicates frontal lobe dysfunction.

Touch Awareness

1. Touch the subject's hand and foot at the same time.
2. Does the subject feel **both** touches?
3. Concussed subjects will only notice one of the two touches.

Turning

1. Seat the subject in a swivel chair.
2. With their eyes closed, turn them quickly to the left or right.
3. If the subject's head does not move, their brains are struggling to adapt.

Finger Exercises

1. Ask the subject to hold their hands at their sides and move the right and left index fingers.
2. First have the subject move their head to look at the finger that is currently moving, then after a series of this have them switch to observe the finger that is **not** moving.
3. If they have trouble switching this suggests impulsivity and attention problems.

Sequencing

1. Have the subject strike their thigh with their right fist, right palm, then the side of their right hand.
2. Repeat this process for the left hand/left thigh.
3. Inability to complete sequencing shows frontal lobe impairment.

Thigh Strikes

1. The subject must strike their thighs with right palm and left fist simultaneously.
2. Have them alternate which hand is a fist or palm.

Vision Tracking

1. Move your fingers horizontally across the subject's vision to 45 degrees on either side. The subject is abnormal if they can't maintain gaze or if their eye movements are jerky.
2. Have the subject focus on something above them.
3. Move an object side to side so they can focus on it with their peripheral vision (without moving their eyes).
4. Have the subject close their eyes and stick out their tongue for 30 seconds.

Relaxation

1. Support the subject's arm or leg, then let go.
2. Severely abnormal subject's limbs may remain suspended (paratonia).