

## **Wrestling Injury Time – Updated for 2021-22**

The NFHS wrestling rules committee has adopted the WIAA modification to injury time-outs regarding injuries to the head and neck involving cervical column, nervous system, and/or concussion as an NFHS wrestling rule. The rule was modified to **five** minutes.

### **Rule 8 – Section 2 INJURY**

#### **ART. 4 . . . CONCUSSION**

**a.** Any contestant who exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the match and shall not return to competition until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports, in Appendix B.)

**b.** The following modifications to injury time-outs will be used in all competition regarding injuries to the head and neck involving cervical column and/or nervous system:

(1) In the absence of appropriate health-care professional, (physician and/or certified athletic trainer), all injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and/or nervous system (HNC) will be covered by Rule 8-2-4a. (5-28-3, 5-28-6, 6-4-3, 8-2-6 and 8-2-9)

(2) When appropriate health-care professional(s) (physician or certified athletic trainer) are present they have jurisdiction to evaluate the injured wrestler for injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and/or nervous system only during the allowed time limit (maximum) of five (5) minutes. After that evaluation, the wrestler would be required to prepare without delay for continuation or default the match.

(3) A second occurrence of injury to the head and neck involving cervical column and/or central nervous system in the same match shall require the wrestler to default the match.

The rule allows more time to evaluate potential concussions and injury to neck and cervical column when an appropriate health-care provider is present. If appropriate health-care provider is not present, the regular injury time is used. It can only be used once to avoid fake injuries. It cannot be used for any other types of injuries. An additional five minutes is reasonable and has worked well in Wisconsin.

### **CERVICAL COLUMN AND / OR NERVOUS SYSTEM TIME OUT**

**How is the 1.5 minute injury time out different than the 5 minutes allowed to evaluate a wrestler that has an injury to the head / neck / or vertebral column (together known as the CNS)?** If a wrestler has a CNS (central nervous system) injury, the licensed athletic trainer or a doctor may extend the normal 1.5 minutes of IT to 5 minutes to assure that a proper evaluation is completed. Upon completion of the 5 minutes, if deemed OK to wrestle by the medical attendant, the wrestler must be prepared to wrestle without delay. If they are unable to do so at the end of the 5 minute CNS timeout the wrestler will lose by default. A second occurrence of any CNS injury (any amount of time) to the same wrestler will result in a default. As a result, the injured wrestler loses by default. This type of injury time out will count as 1 of your 2 allotted time outs. When this rule is applied, time consumed will in no way affect time used or available for other types of injuries. So, the wrestler may still have a time out remaining and 1.5 minutes of injury time left for a non-CNS injury. If the injury is caused by an illegal hold (perhaps a slam) the normal 2 minutes will be allowed for recovery time if requested by the trainer. If unable to continue, the injured contestant wins by default.

**How do you handle this type of injury if there is no medical personal present?** In the absence of a certified medical personnel (physician and/or licensed athletic trainer), all injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and or CNS will be covered in 1.5 minutes like all other injuries.

**Who determines if it is a CNS injury?** Not the official! After a small amount of injury time has elapsed, the official may ask the LAT / doctor if the injury is a CNS injury. If it is, ask them if they would like to extend the time to 5 minutes to make a proper evaluation. It is part of the official's job to meet with the trainer(s) prior to competition to make sure they understand the rule and how you/they intend to apply it.

**What do you mean by “extend the time?”** Sometimes the medical attendant does not feel they need more than 1.5 minutes and they work on the athlete for almost the entire 1.5 minutes and then ask to “extend” the time. They certainly can do this. If they had used the entire 1.5 minutes they would then have 3.5 minutes left to complete the CNS evaluation. You do not get the 1.5 minutes then an additional 5 minutes!

**What happens if they chose to extend the time and end up using only 3.5 minutes total?** If they chose to extend the time, using any part of the extended time is equivalent to using the entire 5 minutes. You cannot ‘bank’ any part of it.

**Explain how the extended time would work when applying recovery time due to an illegal hold.** For example, if the wrestler receives a head injury due to slam, after 1 minute the trainer indicates they would like to extend the time for a proper exam. They would still only have the maximum of 2 total minutes for their evaluation. When the time elapses, if the athlete is deemed good to go by the trainer, they would continue. Remember, a coach may overrule the decision of the trainer / doctor that declares that the wrestler may continue. A coach may not overrule when medical personal states the athlete may not continue. If unable to continue, they win by default. If they do continue and they have another CNS injury, related or not related to the first one, the athlete would lose by default.

### SUMMARY

- **In the absence of a certified medical personnel (physician and/or licensed athletic trainer), all injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and or CNS will be covered in 1.5 minutes**
- **When a LAT or physician is present, they may extend the allowed time to a maximum of 5 minutes for evaluation, after 5 minutes, the athlete would be required to prepare to wrestle without delay (if unable - they will default)**
- **A second occurrence (to the same wrestler) of any cervical column and/or CNS injury (any amount of time) will result in a default**
- **This type of injury will always count as 1 of your 2 allotted time outs**
- **When this rule is applied, time consumed will in no way affect time used, or available, for other types of injuries**
- **If caused by an illegal hold then 2 minutes may be requested by medical personnel for recovery time, if unable to continue, then the injured contestant wins by default**
- **If the contestant uses 2 minutes for recovery time and continues, the second time any injury covered under this rule occurs - the injured contestant loses by default**
- **A LAT or physician may terminate a match at any time due to illness or injury**