



## Redwood Football Player Safety

The Redwood Football coaching staff considers player's safety to be our number one priority. Football, like all sports can be played in a manner that limits the risks and injuries associated with physical activities. This is a summary of Redwood Football's injury protocol and the measures aimed at reducing contact related injuries. It is also important to visit the link at the bottom of the page to learn more about player safety. The district has provided this link to many valuable resources including symptoms of common injuries and information regarding our new concussion baseline testing.

### **Coaching Staff:**

One of the most important aspects of coaching is preventing injuries to athletes. Our coaching staff has tailored the practice routines to limit the amount of contact a player is involved in. As required by State Assembly Bill-2127, full contact is now limited to two practices a week for 90 minute durations. At Redwood, we go further by limiting contact for just 60 minute durations. That may still sound like a long time but keep in mind that players only participate in any one drill for a few seconds every minute as coaches give instructions and feedback. Coaches are also instructed to keep a "short whistle" and stop a play before any unnecessary contact occurs. These measures help keep players as safe as possible while properly preparing them for game situations.

Though the utmost is done to prevent injuries during practice, in the event of an injury all coaches are required to be certified in the following areas:

- First Aid
- CPR
- AED
- Cardiac Arrest
- Concussion

These certifications are required to be renewed every 2 years, ensuring that coaches are prepared in the rare event that their assistance is required. Players and coaches also prepare for and simulate emergencies prior to the season to ensure that all parties with a responsibility are ready when called upon. These situations include, but are not limited to, emergencies such as an active shooter on campus, cardiac arrest, or heat stroke. While we hope that we never have to participate in one of these situations, the Redwood coaching staff and players are prepared to react to a host of critical situations.

### **Athletic Trainer:**

At Redwood we are fortunate to have an onsite athletic trainer that is present at all practices and games. Our trainer, Americ Alvarado has been working with students at Redwood since 2010 and is our best resource to both prevent injuries and to help make speedy recoveries from them. Americ's expertise helps coaches and players quickly identify the extent of an injury and to prepare a timetable for recovery. Though our athletic trainer is a highly qualified professional his opinion and advice is not a substitute to that of a physician. In the event of a more serious injury, players and parents should seek a physician's diagnosis. Our trainer can recommend your student to a specialist, if necessary.

### **On Field Injury Protocol:**

1. A player notifies a coach that they or a teammate is injured
2. The coach moves the practice to an area that keeps the injured player safe and reassigns the coaching staff so that he can attend to the athlete
3. The coach quickly evaluates the injured athlete to ensure that it is not life-threatening.
4. Once the coach determines that it is not life threatening and that emergency personal are not required, the coach checks with the player to ensure that the injury is not related to the head, neck, or spine. This avoids unnecessary and potentially dangerous movement of the player.
5. If the player can do so he is moved to the sideline for his safety and the athletic trainer is notified that a player on the field needs his assistance.
6. The trainer comes to the field, talks to the coach to learn about the situation and evaluates the player. If further evaluation is necessary he is driven by the trainer to the trainer's room.
7. The trainer, after making a determination, will notify the coach and parents of an injury and his recommended course of action.
8. Players are required to check in with trainer daily until his injury is healed.

Under no circumstance is a coach allowed or qualified to determine whether a player is fit to resume play. Depending on the injury, a signed doctor's note and clearance from the trainer are required for an athlete to resume play.

### **Concussions:**

Concussions have become a regular topic in football recently and for good reason. Concussions have many negative consequences and we take them very seriously. We don't run from this fact or pretend that they don't occur. Instead we try to arm ourselves with more knowledge and attempt to find ways to prevent them. Of course like any injury, concussions are not 100% preventable. Here are some of the steps we use to limit exposure to potential head injuries.

- Baseline testing: Administered prior to full contact by our athletic trainer this software helps professionals evaluate a player before and after a head injury has occurred. The software helps the professional determine if an athlete is fully recovered and can measure their progress. Redwood High School uses the imPACT® test. More information about this test can be found in the link listed below.
- Helmets are certified annually, and new and improved designs are phased into the program. Coaches individually size and equip all players to ensure safety, proper fit, and comfort.
- Contact at practices is limited and plays are ended quickly by whistle to avoid unnecessary contact.
- Coaches teach tackling and blocking techniques that DO NOT use the head, but instead rely upon the shoulder and/or hands. It is important to remember the helmet is there to protect and is not intended to be used as a striking device. It is a distinct disadvantage to lead with the helmet as this incurs a 15 yard penalty in games. Therefore, coaches and players gain no advantage to teach or use these unsafe methods, which were more common to past generations.
- All players who complain of any head injury, no matter the severity are immediately withheld from activities and the trainer is promptly called to check for signs of a head injury.

**\*\*\*Important\*\*\***

Head injuries can be one of the most difficult injuries to diagnose. Many times symptoms may not occur until days after an initial injury. Parents can often help identify a head injury before a professional can. Many players may not know the symptoms to a concussion. Please read about

the symptoms (link below) and review them with your athlete. If an athlete exhibits these conditions or his conditions change rapidly, seek medical attention immediately. Many times this can occur over the weekend where coaches and our trainer are present to witness these indicators. Players often may say they don't feel well and not correlate this symptom to a head injury. Knowing these signs can help prevent further injury and put your athlete on to the road of recovery.

### **Our Commitment:**

Player safety is our number one priority. Redwood football coaches don't coach for the big money, the bright lights, or for any reason other than to enrich the lives and high school experience of our athletes. We treat every athlete as if they were our own child and would never put an athlete in a dangerous situation. We understand that at the end of the day, our athletes are students, and that their academics and future success comes first.

We hope that this summary, in conjunction with the additional information below, will help you stay informed of our current safety practices and assist you and your athlete as they prepare to play football at Redwood High School.

### **Links and Contacts:**

**PLEASE REVIEW: [TUHSD Health for Athletes](#)**

Athletic Trainer, Americ Alvarado [Contact/Info](#)

Head Coaches [Contact](#)