



A guide to Pre-Season Concussion Baseline Testing

Concussion is a G-force related brain injury caused by direct or indirect impact to the head or body resulting in short term changes in brain function. Junior AFL players have an increased risk of concussion due to their developing bodies and brains, which also increases their risk for longer recovery times and an increased risk of re-injury.

The Seaside Osteo provides expert concussion care, including Complete Concussion Management baseline testing, rehabilitation, return-to-sport guidance and clearance. Our osteopaths are trained in evidence-based concussion management tailored to junior athletes.

Pre-Season Concussion Baseline Testing records key measures when an athlete is healthy (symptoms, balance, vestibular/ocular function, neck screening and optional cognitive/oculomotor tools). If a head injury occurs, post-injury results can be compared to baseline data to help clinical decision-making. Baseline results support, but never replace, a qualified clinician's assessment.

Protect your players and support your club with a professional concussion education and baseline testing program.

The Seaside Osteo

Key statistics of concussion in junior sport

~5 concussions

in junior sport (general)
per team per season

~6-7 concussions

in junior AFL per team
per season

~5-6 concussions

in junior girls AFL per team
per season

~20% children

sustain a concussion in
organised youth sport

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Benefits of Pre-Season Concussion Baseline Testing

- ☒ Provides an individualised reference for recovery tracking.
- ☒ Offers objective measures for balance, reaction time, and vision.
- ☒ Identifies pre-existing issues that may affect recovery.
- ☒ Improves education for players, parents, and coaches.
- ☒ Supports faster, safer rehabilitation planning.

Concussion Education and Pre-Season Testing Program Pricing Structure

Tier 1

Essentials (Education Only)

Best for: Clubs seeking foundational education without baseline testing or software.

Includes:

- Education session (face-to-face 75-90 min) for players, coaches and parents (same venue/night)
- Emergency Action Plan template
- Coach/parent checklists
- Take-home PDF and Q&A

Annual pricing

Single team: \$650 (~\$25/player)

2-3 teams: \$550 each (~\$21/player)

Whole club (up to 6 teams): \$2,600 (~\$17/player)

Tier 2

Essentials + Field Baseline

Best for: Clubs wanting manual baseline testing without software.

Includes:

- Everything in Tier 1
- Field-administered group baseline (symptoms, VOMS, BESS, cervical function, reaction time)
- Individual baseline cards and player/club spreadsheet
- Sideline checklist pack

Annual pricing

Single team: \$1,450 (~\$55/player)

2-3 teams: \$1,250 each (~\$48/player)

Whole club (4-6 teams): \$4,800 (~\$31/player)

Notes

- Cost per player is based on 26 players per team; adjust for actual roster sizes.
- Travel included up to 150 km.
- Prices include an estimated cost per player, assuming an average team size of 26 players.
- In-Clinic Baseline testing and Post-Concussion Assessment \$160 per consult.
- All packages are aligned with AFL and ASC community concussion guidelines.
- Tier 3 and Tier 4 pricing reflects the inclusion of Complete Concussions/CCMI software along with advanced assessment tools.
- Tier 3 and Tier 4 pricing includes software administration, integration, and reporting.

Tier 3

Software-Integrated Comprehensive

Best for: Clubs wanting full software suite plus objective data.

Includes:

- Everything in Tier 2
- Complete Concussions (CCMI) software for baseline/post-injury, clinical documentation and remote monitoring.
- Administer and integrate testing, manage athlete accounts, generate reports
- 50% discount on individual initial post-concussion assessment (1 per player)
- Return-to-Learn resources, school comms pack
- 50% discount on individual initial post-concussion assessment (in-clinic)

Annual pricing

Single team: \$2,200 (~\$85/player)

2-3 teams: \$1,950 each (~\$75/player)

Whole club (4-6 teams): \$8,000 (~\$49/player)

Tier 4

Annual Partner Club Program (Software-Powered)

Best for: Clubs seeking a full-year concussion safety partnership.

Includes:

- Everything in Tier 3
- Mid-season re-screening via software
- Volunteer ERC-style upskilling and policy support
- Priority clinic access and bespoke referral letters
- Annual club safety report
- Club staff up-skilling and training
- 100% discount on individual initial post-concussion assessment (in-clinic, 1 per player)

Annual pricing

Whole club (up to 6 teams): \$12,500 (~\$80/player)

Additional teams: \$1,500 each (~\$58/player)

Comparison table

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Education session	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paper-based baseline testing		✓	✓	✓
Return-to-learn/school comms		✓	✓	✓
Software-integrated baseline and tracking			✓	✓
Discounted initial post-concussion assessment			✓	✓
Mid-season re-screening				✓
Volunteer upskilling				✓
Priority clinic access and post-injury support				✓
Annual safety and compliance report				✓

Pre-Season Concussion Baseline Testing – FAQs

Why is baseline testing useful for junior AFL players?

Children and adolescents recover differently to adults and can have variable symptom reporting. Structured baselines provide objective references for balance, eye-movement and cognitive tasks, helping clinicians tailor rehabilitation and return-to-learn/play plans.

What is included in The Seaside Osteo baseline?

- Symptom inventory (0-6 severity scale)
- VOMS (vestibular/ocular motor screening: pursuits, saccades, convergence, VOR, visual motion)
- Balance assessment (modified BESS) and tandem gait as needed
- Cervical spine screen (ROM and isometric strength)
- Simple reaction time test
- Optional validated tools via software (e.g., King-Devick and/or computerised neurocognitive testing such as CCMI) when requested by the club or parent/guardian
- Fit-for-sport education: red flags, remove-from-play, and communication templates for parents/schools

Is baseline testing required for participation?

No. It is recommended as a helpful decision-support tool. Participation should not be contingent on baseline testing, and lack of a baseline never delays removal from play or medical care after a suspected concussion.

How often should juniors complete a baseline?

Annually is recommended (or every 12 months), and sooner if there has been a concussion, significant growth spurt, vision changes or new neurological/learning conditions.

When should testing be scheduled?

Ideally 2-6 weeks before the season starts, when the athlete is healthy, well-rested, and free of acute illness. Avoid testing within 24-48 hours of strenuous exercise or if symptomatic from any illness or prior head knock.

How long does baseline testing take and where is it done?

A standard team session takes about 10-15 minutes per athlete (field-based station format). If optional software tests are added, allow 20-30 minutes per athlete depending on the package.

What if my child wears glasses or contact lenses?

They should bring and wear their usual corrected lenses for both baseline and any post-injury testing to ensure results are comparable.

What are the limitations of baseline testing?

Baselines cannot diagnose concussion, predict recovery times, or guarantee prevention. They provide context for clinicians. Post-injury care still relies on clinical assessment, symptom-limited exercise progressions, and medically supervised return-to-learn then return-to-play. Post-injury care can be better individualized with baseline testing and return-to-play clearance testing is based on these individualized tests, not normative data.

What happens if a concussion is suspected in a game or training?

Remove the athlete from play immediately – no same-day return. Monitor for red flags and seek medical assessment. Follow your club's Emergency Action Plan. For community football, current guidance requires a minimum 21-day stand-down from matches with a stepwise, symptom-limited progression and medical clearance before full return. Return-to-learn/school precedes return-to-sport. The Seaside Osteo concussion rehabilitation policy reflects the AFL concussion guidelines and emphasis is on full recovery prior to return-to-play, the AFL stand-down period is a minimum requirement.

How are baselines used after an injury?

A clinician may compare post-injury results (symptoms, VOMS, balance, and optional software measures) to the pre-season baseline to help identify deficits (e.g., vestibular/ocular or cervical findings) and to individualise rehabilitation and school/sport accommodations.

Who conducts the testing?

Baseline sessions are delivered by The Seaside Osteo osteopaths with specialised training in concussion rehabilitation and Complete Concussions Management methods.

Do we need parent/guardian consent?

Yes. Written consent is required for all athletes under 18. We provide consent forms and information sheets in advance.

How is athlete data stored and who can access it?

We comply with the Australian Privacy Principles. Data is stored securely and shared only with parents/guardians and authorised clinicians. Data can be shared with coaching and support staff but only with prior parent/guardian consent. Where CCMI software is used, athlete accounts are created with parent/guardian consent and platform privacy policies apply.

What should athletes bring to testing?

Comfortable clothing, their glasses/contacts, any relevant medical information (e.g., learning differences, migraines), and the signed consent form.

What does a typical rehabilitation pathway look like if a concussion occurs?

1. Initial medical assessment and symptom-limited rest (24-48 hours)
2. Early, sub-symptom aerobic activity as tolerated
3. Targeted vestibular/oculomotor and cervical spine rehabilitation if indicated
4. Graduated return-to-learn (classroom adjustments as needed)
5. Graduated return-to-sport over multiple stages with monitoring
6. Medical clearance before full contact/competition

How much does it cost?

Pricing depends on package selection (education only, field baseline, software-integrated, or annual partner program). See our current package flyer or contact us for a club-specific quote. In-clinic testing fees are \$160 per consultation. In-field or club-based testing pricing has been adjusted to make testing more accessible for junior athletes.

Can schools be involved?

Yes. We provide school communication templates and can liaise with year-level coordinators to support return-to-learn planning.



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Prepared by The Seaside Osteo (qualified Complete Concussions Management rehabilitation specialist osteopaths). This FAQ outlines evidence-based guidance for junior AFL clubs on baseline testing and concussion care. Content reflects current community-level AFL guidance and contemporary concussion best practice.