

Concussion in Alaska: Preparing for Healthcare Visits

No two concussions are exactly alike. Similarly, no two recovery journeys are identical. While concussions are usually not life-threatening, they can change how a person feels, thinks, or acts. It's important to take all concussions seriously and seek medical attention.

Whether you're getting evaluated after a recent hit to the head or following up on symptoms that haven't resolved on their own, this guide is designed to help you feel prepared, informed, and empowered when talking to your healthcare provider.



Staying Positive and Advocating for Care

Progress may come slowly, and setbacks are normal.

Staying hopeful and focusing on small steps forward can make a big difference. With the right care and support, symptoms from a concussion or Persistent Post-Concussion Symptoms (PPCS), also called Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS), can and will improve over time. Recovery often requires patience, self-awareness, and ongoing communication with a healthcare provider.

Before appointments, take time to note how you've been feeling and any questions or concerns you have. This can help your provider better understand your experience and tailor treatment to your needs.

If you're not seeing improvement or need additional support, it's okay to speak up. You can ask about referrals to specialists or seek a second opinion. Taking an active role in your care helps ensure you get the support and attention you deserve.

Preparing for Your Appointment

Preparing for your appointment can help you get the most out of your visit.

Here are a few steps to take:



Track your symptoms:

Keep a record of what symptoms you're having, when they started, and any changes you've noticed.



Bring notes:

Include how the injury happened, how you've been feeling since, and any concerns or questions you have.



List your medications:

Include prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and supplements.



Ask about experience:

It's okay to ask if your healthcare provider has experience treating concussions. If not, ask for a referral.



Bring support:

If possible, bring a family member or friend to help take notes and remember what was discussed.



Be honest:

Share everything you're experiencing — even if it feels small. Mood, sleep, and memory changes all matter.

Questions to Ask

Preparing questions ahead of time can help you get the information and support you need to feel confident about your care.

Here are some helpful questions to consider during your appointment:

1

How long should I expect my symptoms to last, and what is the typical recovery timeline?

2

Are there specific activities I should avoid or limit right now, such as screen time, physical exercise, or driving?

3

Can you help me develop a gradual plan to return to work, school, or daily activities safely?

4

What treatments or therapies do you recommend, and which can I access locally or through telehealth?

5

Are there local support services or community resources available for concussion recovery?

6

How can I manage changes in mood, memory, or sleep during recovery?

7

When should I schedule a follow-up visit?