

# First Aid and Boxing

## Nosebleeds

Nosebleeds are a common injury in boxing. Most nosebleeds can be stopped by using a nose plug, Vaseline and applying pressure. Never have the boxer lie down or tilt the head backward. Another way to treat nosebleeds is to firmly pinch the nose just below the bone up against the face. Apply pressure for five minutes. If the nosebleed doesn't stop after 10 minutes, seek medical attention.

How to recognize a broken nose or nasal fracture if the nose is not broken or disfigured. If the blood is dark and a constant stream, or constant drainage, then the boxer most likely has a broken nose. There can be possible complications from a broken nose to include:

- Change in the appearance of the nose or the tip of the nose.
- A large amount of blood in the nasal septum.
- A hole in the nasal septum or causing the bridge of the nose to collapse (saddle nose deformity).
- Crooked (deviated) nasal septum.
- Permanent breathing difficulty.
- A change in or loss of sense of smell.

Medical treatment for a broken nose is usually not needed. But for a severe broken nose medical treatment should be done within 7-10 days of the injury.

## Minor cuts, Lacerations

Minor cuts and lacerations usually occur on a boxer as the result of a head butt, elbow or punch in the area around the eyes. When the cut occurs the bleeding can be stopped by using:

- Vaseline
- Ice bags, No-Swells and Swabs can also be used

\*The USA Boxing Technical manual also has a list of various things that can be used during competition to stop the bleeding of cuts, lacerations and nosebleeds.

## Sprains and Strains

When a strain or sprain happens it is always a good practice to seek medical attention. But until medical aid can be rendered (usually within the first 24-48 hours) use the acronym RICE:

- Rest the sprained/ strained area
- Ice for 20 minutes every hour (never place the ice directly on the skin)
- Compress the area with an ACE bandage, remembering not to wrap it too tightly.
- Elevate the area above the heart level

## Concussion Awareness

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding”, getting your “bell rung” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

Signs observed by coaching staff	Symptoms reported by athlete
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or “pressure” in head
Is confused about assignment or position	Nausea or vomiting
Forgets an instruction	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or blurry vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light
Answers questions slowly	Sensitivity to noise
Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can’t recall events <i>prior</i> to hit or fall	Confusion
Can’t recall events <i>after</i> hit or fall	Just not “feeling right” or “feeling down”

If an athlete reports **one or more** symptoms of concussion listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, s/he should be kept out of boxing the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says s/he is symptom-free and it’s OK to return to boxing. ***Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself.***

Rest is the key to helping an athlete recover from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games, may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.

*Note: With any injury a good rule of thumb is “when in doubt seek professional medical attention.”*