

Post-Concussive Syndrome: Definition

James A.D. Otis, M.D.

Director, Pain and Headache Management Group

Department of Neurology BMC



EXCEPTIONAL CARE. WITHOUT EXCEPTION.



School of Medicine

Boston Medical Center is the primary teaching affiliate
of the Boston University School of Medicine.

DEFINITION

- *Post-concussion syndrome* is the persistence of a combination of physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep symptoms beyond the usual recovery period after a concussion.
- WHO Definition and ICD-10 Definitions
 - a syndrome that occurs following head trauma (usually sufficiently severe to result in loss of consciousness) and includes a number of disparate symptoms such as headache, dizziness, fatigue, irritability, difficulty in concentration and performing mental tasks, impairment of memory, insomnia, and reduced tolerance to stress, emotional excitement, or alcohol.¹

1. WHO (World Health Organization) International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems. 2010. [October 3, 2013]. (10th Revision. [Online version.])

PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITION

- Does not define the duration of the post-acute period.
 - Operationally, this seems to hover around 3 months
- Symptoms are nonspecific
 - Consider Concurrent PTSD
- Does not take into account presence of symptoms pre-injury