**For Immediate Release**

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***Prevent Winter Sports Traumatic Brain Injury***

**Mechanicsburg, Pa.** – The American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division is participating in National Winter Sports Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Awareness Month. Whether you’re hitting the slopes, sprinting up the court for a fast break, or sledding down your neighborhood hill, it’s time for winter sports. National Winter Sports TBI Awareness Month raises awareness of the health risks athletes face when they participate in winter sports, specifically traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) and concussions. According to the Brain Injury Association of America, more than 5.3 million children and adults in the United States who are living with a permanent brain injury-related disability.

**How can I prevent a sport TBI?**

“These injuries are easily preventable,” said ATSPA CEO, Krista Brands.

* Wear a properly fitted helmet that is appropriate for the sport.
* Set a “no hits to the head” or “no dangerous play” rule for Hockey or other contact sports, especially in practices.
* Take lessons. Learn how to properly play and participate in the sport. Lessons will also teach athletes how to fall more safely and less often.

**What does a TBI look like?**

A mild TBI can include disorientation or loss of consciousness lasting 30 minutes or less, mild headaches, memory loss, difficulty thinking, mood swings and frustration. A severe TBI can include loss of consciousness for longer than 30 minutes, memory loss lasting longer than 24 hours, impairment of high-level cognitive function and not being able to speak properly.

**Observed Signs and Symptoms:**

* Dazed or stunned
* Forgetfulness and confusion
* Clumsy movements
* Slow answers
* Loss of consciousness (even briefly)
* Mood, behavior, or personality changes
* Can’t recall events prior to or after a hit or fall

**Experienced Signs and Symptoms:**

* Headache or “pressure” in head
* Nausea or vomiting
* Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision
* Light or noise sensitivity
* Sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy feelings
* Confusion, concentration, or memory problems
* Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down

**How do I treat a TBI?**

1. Remove the athlete from play.
2. Have the athlete evaluated by a health care professional.
3. Keep the athlete out of play until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating concussion, says they are symptom-free and okay to return to play.

**If you believe someone has suffered a traumatic brain injury, time is critical. Seek immediate medical help.**

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The American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division (ATSPA) is a non-profit organization committed to trauma prevention and mitigation through education and advocacy. Our work includes providing presentations and educational materials on many trauma prevention topics, including concussions, water safety, senior falls, bike safety, traffic safety and much more.