

Natividad Medical Center Launches Brain Smart Concussion Awareness Program
Trauma Center Partners with Local Athletic Programs to Educate on Concussion Symptoms

Salinas, Calif. – October 17, 2016 – In response to the approximately 3.8 million sports-related concussions occurring annually in the U.S., [Natividad Medical Center](#) (NMC) today announced the launch of Brain Smart, a community education series on head trauma.

An estimated 1.5 million concussions occur each year in children, but roughly half are never reported to healthcare providers. A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that can have long-lasting consequences if left untreated.

Concussion rates in youth sports are up 500 percent, according to a 2016 [FAIR Health study](#). The most incidences occur between September and October, the start of football season in the U.S. While football is the most widely recognized sport with concussion risk, soccer, wrestling, basketball, bike riding and others have increasing concussion rates.

As the only Level II Trauma Center in the county, Natividad Medical Center is well positioned to address the need for information concerning concussions, which are often overlooked or misunderstood.

“Natividad is committed to providing community education that leads to recognition, earlier treatment and ultimately reduces the number of life-threatening trauma incidents,” said Debi Siljander, MD, Sports Medicine Physician at NMC. “Brain Smart is a platform to educate local athletes, parents and coaches about the dangers of undiagnosed concussions in sports. The vast majority of concussions don’t involve loss of consciousness, and it’s crucial that if injuries do happen, players take time to let their brain heal. A second concussion before the first one heals doubles recovery time for teen athletes and worsens short-term mental function.”

NMC is partnering with high school athletic departments throughout Monterey County to provide educational workshops for coaches, parents and players on the inherent dangers of concussions, their often-subtle symptoms and the process for returning to play.

Keep an eye out for concussion tips and ways to keep your brain healthy on KION-TV and Telemundo this November. To learn more about Brain Smart, please visit: NatividadBrainSmart.com.

About Natividad Medical Center (NMC)

Owned and operated by Monterey County, NMC is a 172-bed, acute-care hospital providing health care services to county residents for more than 130 years. Based in Salinas, California, NMC offers inpatient, outpatient, emergency, diagnostic and specialty medical care. NMC provides more than 38,000 patient days of care each year and has more than 52,000 emergency department visits per year. NMC is a Level II Trauma Center providing the immediate availability of specialized personnel, equipment and services to treat the most severe and critical injuries. NMC’s Trauma Center is a vital community service locally that saves

lives and eliminates the need to fly critically injured patients to a distant trauma center. NMC is ranked No. 1 in newborn deliveries in Monterey County and is the only teaching hospital on the Central Coast through its affiliation with the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). With a medical staff of more than 300 physicians, NMC's mission is to continually monitor and improve the health of the people, including the vulnerable, in Monterey County through coordinated, affordable high-quality health care. For more information, please call 831-755-4111 or visit www.natividad.com.

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