



## Concussion Chronicles

### My Story: Daniel Battaglia



My name is Daniel Battaglia and I played hockey for 8 years. I played 2 years of roller hockey and 6 years of ice hockey. I also played lacrosse.



I had my 1<sup>st</sup> concussion during November 2011 when I was in 15 in a high school hockey tournament with Servite High School. It happened due to a scrum in front of the net after the whistle. I grabbed someone and lost my balance and fell straight back, hitting my head (with my goalie helmet on) on the ice. My next one came 8 months later in September 2012 when I was 16, again playing high school hockey. This time someone crashed the net but he couldn't stop in time due to his skill level and ran me over, with the back of my head again hitting the ice. My third concussion happened 5 months later in January 2013, still 16 years old, during a CAHA weekend with the Jr. Ducks 16AA. Someone drove the net again but caught an edge, sliding right into me and hitting my head with some part of his body.

For my first concussion, I was not sure that I had a concussion. My adrenaline was pumping so hard because of the game situation I really did not feel anything. When my head first hit the ice it hurt, but I didn't think concussion until after the game when my head hurt just to move it, and loud noises were painful. I went to urgent care the next morning but they didn't do anything for me except point us in the direction of my doctor. My second concussion, I figured I had a concussion but I played through it again due to the game situation. My third concussion, I was pulled from the game and knew immediately that it was a concussion.

With my first concussion I was out for a couple weeks. My second concussion I was out for about a month, because I scored so high on the concussion baseline test that it was hard for me to get back to those scores. My third concussion ended my hockey career. It also delayed my return to playing lacrosse, which was about 6 months later in the summer. Every time I had a concussion my recovery got longer. At school, I went from missing one week, to two weeks, then a whole month during my last concussion. Thankfully I only had one bout with nausea with my second concussion, but all of them included sleeping all the time, headaches, I was sluggish, and I had no willpower to really do anything. I am very thankful my family and friends understood, and helped me through each concussion and recovery. With my first two concussions, I returned to play slowly. I skated before I was cleared for play. Once I was clear, it was full practice, then games. I did not return to hockey after my last concussion.

Since my third concussion, I have actually had a fourth concussion playing lacrosse at the University of Utah. Since my fourth concussion, I feel I have recovered 100% to what is normal for me. With each concussion have become smarter and more aware of how they occur, and how I react to them.

My concussions have definitely impacted my life, and changed it. I not only talk about concussions with teammates, but also with friends and family. If there was one thing that I want people to know, it is that it is not worth it to play with a concussion. Not allowing your brain to heal adequately can lead to a higher risk of more concussions and a much higher risk of a concussion being fatal. Concussion awareness is important to everyone, because they are dangerous if they are not treated properly. Every coach, player, parent, doctor, teammate should take concussions seriously due to the risks of having one and not allowing your brain to recover.