Sports concussions focus of lecture

When is it safe for an athlete to return to play following a concussion? In recent years, concussions resulting from sports activity have gained the attention of sports enthusiasts and scientists alike.

On Wednesday, Dr. Paul van Donkelaar, a clinical neuroscientist, will present a talk as part of the Science in Society Series entitled about sport-related concussions.

The public event is jointly hosted by Okanagan College and the Okanagan Science Centre and will be held at the college’s Vernon campus at 7:30 p.m.

“The big question is ‘how do you know if an athlete who has suffered a concussion is truly fit to return to play?’” said Dr. van Donkelaar, director of the School of Health and Exercise Sciences at the University of B.C.’s Okanagan campus.

“They may feel fine, their symptoms may be gone, yet there could be undetected damage to the brain. Further, the risk of multiple concussions could potentially lead to long-term disability or even premature death.”

The presentation will highlight key discoveries in changes to the brain as a result of a sports-related concussion and how this knowledge will lead to improved initial diagnosis, care, and return to activity decisions.

Admission to the event is $7 in advance or $10 at the door. For advanced tickets, call the Okanagan Science Centre at 250-545-3644. Visit okanagan-sisss.wordpress.com for more information.

The Science in Society Speaker Series is sponsored by the Best Western Vernon Lodge, Starbucks Coffee, Cooper’s Food and The Morning Star.