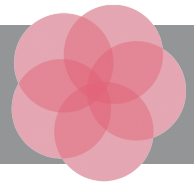


Concussion Information Sheet



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that affects how the brain works. It can happen after a blow to the head, face, neck, or body. A person does not have to lose consciousness to have a concussion. Symptoms often appear immediately but may also start 1-2 days after the injury. A concussion can't be seen on x-rays or brain scans.

Common symptoms of a concussion are:

Physical:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or sound
- Balance problems
- Reduced exercise tolerance

Cognitive/Mental:

- Feeling slow or tired
- Low energy
- Not thinking clearly
- Difficulty with computer work
- Difficulty reading
- Difficulty remembering

Emotional:

- Easily upset
- Easily angered
- Feeling sad
- Nervous/anxious
- Feeling more emotional

Sleep and fatigue:

- Sleeping more
- Sleeping less
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Difficulty staying asleep

What should a person do if they think they or another person may have a concussion?

If a concussion is suspected, stop the activity right away and see a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. Adults and children with a concussion should get guidance from a doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to full contact sport or high-risk activities for another concussion. *"If in doubt, sit them out."*

Red flag symptoms

Symptoms of a more severe injury may appear right away or up to a couple of days after the injury. If any of following symptoms are observed, call an ambulance or bring the person to a doctor for immediate medical care:

- Increased confusion
- Worsening severe headache
- Vomiting repeatedly
- Seizures
- Not waking up
- Trouble walking
- Difficulty talking
- Strange behaviour

How long does it take to recover from a concussion?

- Concussion recovery is different for each person.
- Typically, children and adults recover within 2-4 weeks; adolescents may take longer to become symptom-free.
- Up to 30% of people may have a slower recovery; doctors can screen for risk factors of a prolonged recovery.
- For those at risk for a slower recovery, very early care from an interdisciplinary concussion team is recommended. Interdisciplinary teams should include doctors and clinicians across different disciplines who work together to assess, diagnose, and create a treatment plan.

Recovery tips:

- Complete rest for more than 2 days after a concussion may slow recovery and is no longer recommended. Use the suggested return to activity and school/work protocols on page 2.
- Avoid any activity that has a risk of body contact, falling, or hitting one's head until medically cleared by a doctor.
- Early care (as early as 1-2 days after the injury) by an interdisciplinary concussion team may help people get back to activities faster and safer.
- Supervised aerobic exercise (walking, stationary bike) as early as 1-2 days after the injury may improve recovery.
- School with accommodations should begin after 1-2 days. Missing more than one week of school may be harmful. Medical clearance is not required to return to school.
- Ensure good quality sleep, drink water, and eat balanced meals. Avoid drugs and alcohol.
- Emotional changes are common with concussion; mindfulness, exercise, and speaking with people you trust can help.
- Computer screens, smartphones and video games may bring on symptoms; avoid these in the initial days if they make symptoms worse.



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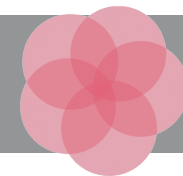
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Return to Activity Protocols



Return to Physical Activity/Sport Protocol:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Rest (1-2 days max)	Light physical activity	Sport-specific physical activity	Non-contact drills and full aerobic activity	Full contact practice (No competition)	Full participation in all sport activities including competition
Calm/quiet activities around the home that do not worsen symptoms. Light walking as long as it does not increase the heart rate. No sports.	Walking, jogging, or cycling on a stationary bike. Symptoms may slightly increase. Aim for 20-30 minutes at a time, but stop if moderate or severe symptom increase. No resistance training. No gym class or sports at recess.	Low-risk sport specific drills and light resistance weight training. No drills or activities that have head impact, risk of collision, or falls. May participate in low-risk gym class activities.	Should not worsen existing symptoms. May expand gym class activities to all that are non-contact. May increase resistance training if tolerated.	Scrimmages, gameplay in practices, cycling outdoors, higher risk activities. <i>This step is only permitted if a person has completed step 5 of Return to School/Work and has medical clearance from a doctor.</i>	Full contact gameplay without restrictions. <i>This step is only permitted if a person has completed step 5 of Return to School/Work and has medical clearance from a doctor.</i>
Goal: Rest	Goal: Increase heart rate	Goal: Increase time and intensity of activity	Goal: Increase aerobic activities to full exertion <u>without</u> body contact.	Goal: Adjust to full contact game play	Goal: Resume full activities and competitions

Return to School and Work Protocol:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Minimal mental activity at home (1-2 days maximum)	Light activities and social interactions at school/work	Increase school and work activities	Return to full-day school/work with support	Return to full school activities (full academic load)
Board games, talking on the phone, crafts. Avoid screened devices, reading, school, work. No driving a motor vehicle. Contact school or work to make a return plan.	Reading, some screened devices (if tolerated), other activities that do not make symptoms worse for 15-30 minutes at a time. Return to in-person school/work for 1-2 hours a day to connect socially.	Half-day in-person school/work with maximum accommodations. Continue social connections.	Full-day in-person school/work with accommodations tailored to the current symptoms. Light homework or low cognitive burden work, and extra time for tasks.	Full days at school, no concussion-related accommodations required. Full activities including regular homework and testing.

Instructions:

Steps 1-4 of Return to Physical Activity/Sport Protocol and Return to School and Work Protocol should be started at the same time.

Step 1 should last a maximum of 2 days, then proceed to step 2. Move from steps 2 to 4 as long as symptoms are tolerated.

A minimum of 24 hours is required at each step. It is expected that some symptoms may still be present.

Steps 5 & 6 of physical activity require medical clearance from a doctor; returning too early to high-risk physical activities increases the risk of another injury and may slow recovery. Medical clearance is not required to progress through return to school steps.