



CONCUSSION GRADUATED RETURN TO PLAY

When an athlete has been evaluated by an athletic trainer and/or a physician for a concussion, the following graduated functional return to play will be followed. *The return to play progression will not begin until the athlete is completely symptom free.* Each step is a 24-hour period; therefore, the return to play progression will be a minimum of 6 days.

If the athlete experiences any symptoms, at any point during the rehabilitation steps, the progression will stop immediately, and the cycle will resume at the previous asymptomatic rehabilitation step after 24 hours of rest. If symptoms continue to occur for 2 consecutive days, the athlete will be referred back to the physician for a follow up evaluation.

When the athlete has successfully completed Step 4 (Non-Contact Drills) of the progression, they will be IMPACT tested using the computerized neuropsychological testing battery to help assist in a safe return to play. The IMPACT results will be reviewed by the physician and return to play status will be determined at this point. Please note that the IMPACT test results will not be the sole determining factor for return to play.

*Adapted from Table 1 McCrory et al. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport 3rd

Rehabilitation Steps	Functional Exercise	Objective of Each Stage
Step 1 -- No Activity	Physical / Cognitive Rest	Recovery
Step 2 -- Light Aerobic Exercise	Walking, Swimming, Bike	Increase Heart Rate
Step 3 -- Sport-Specific Exercise	Running Drills, NO Impact	Add Movement
Step 4 -- Non-Contact Drills	Complex Drills, Resistance Training	Exercise, Coordination, Cognitive Load
Step 5 -- Full Contact	Following Clearance, Normal Training Activities	Restore Confidence, Assess Functional Skills by Staff
Step 6 -- Return to Play	Normal Game Play	

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The treatment, management, and return to play determinations will be individualized to each athlete and dependent on circumstances of each specific case and injury. A safe return to play is the ultimate goal regardless of age and level of play.

For more information regarding concussion, please visit the following websites:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/high_school.html

<https://www.vhsl.org/sports-medicine-links/>

www.nata.org