

Graduated Asymptomatic Return to Play (RTP) Protocol After a Concussion:

This program only applies to athletes with a first time simple concussion. Athletes with a history of multiple concussions either within the same season or prior seasons, complex or prolonged symptoms, history of mood disorder or learning disabilities generally need a more prolonged return to play and often an evaluation by a trained medical provider in the care of concussion. Once an athlete is asymptomatic for 24-48 hours they will progress in an asymptomatic fashion through steps 2-6 prior to full return to play. Each step occurs one day at a time. If the athlete demonstrates any concussion or neurologic symptoms (i.e. headache, dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, ringing in the ears, dizziness, excessive fatigue, difficulty with concentration, mood disturbances, etc.) during exercise challenge or within 24 hours of the challenged, they will rest until asymptomatic for 24 hours prior to re-challenging them at the last level of exertion where they had no symptoms. The exercise challenge RTP needs to be done under the supervision of the Primary Care Physician or Provider, Sports Medicine Physician, Neurologist, or Certified Athletic Trainer.

TABLE 1. Graduated Return to Play Protocol

<u>Rehabilitation Stage</u>	<u>Functional Exercise at Each Stage of Rehabilitation</u>	<u>Objective of Each Stage</u>
1. No activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest	Recovery
2. Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity <70% MPPHR; no resistance training	Increase HR
3. Sport-specific exercise	Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer; no head impact activities	Add movement
4. Non-contact training drills	Progression to more complex training drills, eg passing drills in football and ice hockey; may start progressive resistance training	Exercise, coordination and cognitive load
5. Full contact practice	Following medical clearance, participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
6. Return to play		