

# Sports Concussion

*(Office-based instructions from your Health Care Provider)*

You have been diagnosed with a concussion (also known as a mild traumatic brain injury). This personal plan is based on your symptoms and is designed to help speed your recovery. Your careful attention to these instructions can also prevent a worsening condition or further injury.

Rest is the key. It is very important to limit all physical activity. Particularly, you should not participate in any high-risk activities (e.g., sports, physical education (PE), skateboarding, riding a bike, etc.) if you still have any of the signs and symptoms below.

It is also important to limit activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (e.g., test taking, homework, job-related activities), as this can also make your symptoms worse and your recovery longer. If you no longer have any signs or symptoms and believe that your concentration and thinking are back to normal, you can slowly and carefully return to your daily activities. If you are a child or teenager, get help from your parents, teachers, coaches, and athletic trainers to help monitor your recovery and return to activities.

## Common Signs & Symptoms

It is common for a concussed child or young adult to have one or many concussion signs or symptoms. Signs or symptoms present at time of evaluation are circled or checked.

PHYSICAL		THINKING	EMOTIONAL	SLEEP
Headache	Sensitivity to light	Feeling mentally foggy	Irritability	Drowsiness
Nausea	Sensitivity to noise	Problems concentrating	Sadness	Sleeping more than usual
Fatigue	Numbness/Tingling	Problems remembering	Feeling more emotional	Sleeping less than usual
Visual problems	Vomiting	Feeling more slowed down	Nervousness	Trouble falling asleep
Balance problems	Dizziness			Trouble staying asleep

## Red Flags

Call your doctor or go to your emergency department if you suddenly experience any of the following:

Headache that worsens	Feel very drowsy or can't be awakened	Can't recognize people or places	Unusual behavior change
Seizure	Repeated vomiting	Increasing confusion	Increasing irritability
Neck pain	Slurred speech	Weakness or numbness in arms or legs	Loss of consciousness

## Returning to Daily Activities

- Get lots of rest. Be sure to get enough sleep at night—no late nights. Keep the same bedtime weekdays and weekends.
- Drink lots of fluids and eat carbohydrates and protein to maintain appropriate blood sugar levels and caloric intake.
- During recovery, it is normal to feel frustrated and sad when you do not feel right and you can't be as active as usual.
- Repeated evaluation of your signs and symptoms is recommended to help guide recovery.

## Physical Exertion (check all that apply)

- No physical exertion/athletics/gym class
- Begin return-to-play protocol as indicated below
  - \_\_\_ Low levels of physical activity (only if symptoms do not come back during or after the activity). This includes walking, light jogging, light stationary biking, and light weight lifting. (lower weight, higher reps, no bench, and no squat)
  - \_\_\_ Moderate levels of physical activity with some non-rapid body/head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting. (reduced time and/or reduced weight from your typical routine)

- \_\_\_ Heavy, non-contact physical activity. This includes sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in 3 planes of movement)
- \_\_\_ Full contact in controlled practice
- \_\_\_ Full contact in game play

## Brain Exertion (check all that apply)

- No school, homework, or other after school academic activities
- No reading or texting
- No driving
- No computer time or video games
- Limit television time
- Avoid loud noise and bright lights
- Allow listening to low-volume music (i.e., iPod, book on tape, etc.)
- Allow light reading for \_\_\_ minutes at a time, for a total of \_\_\_ minutes per day
- Allow homework for \_\_\_ minutes at a time, for a total of \_\_\_ minutes per day
- Allow computer work for \_\_\_ minutes at a time, for a total of \_\_\_ minutes per day
- Allow texting for \_\_\_ minutes at a time, for a total of \_\_\_ minutes per day