

Concussion Protocol

Your doctor has diagnosed a Sport-Related Concussion.

A sport-related concussion can cause a wide variety of symptoms, including head and neck pain, dizziness, nausea, irritability, feeling emotional or just “not right”.

Many people who suffer from a concussion improve quickly, and the majority are better within 10-14 days. Children aged 5-13 sometimes require up to 4 weeks.

You can use the following guidelines to help decide how to return to normal activities.

In each phase, you can proceed to the next step once you have been symptom-free for 24 hours. For example, in the “School” category, after 24 hours of feeling well with daily activity you can read or study for 45+ minutes.

If you reach a phase and find that you are symptomatic, you should go back down to the last phase where you felt well. You can try to progress again when you have been symptom-free for another 24 hours.

School/Work

1. Monitor symptoms at home. Consider reading for 10 minutes on/10 minutes off, repeat as tolerated
2. Read or study for 45+ minutes
3. Return to class/work
 - a. Consider sitting near the door so you can take a break if symptoms occur
 - b. Consider adding 1-2 classes/hours of work per day until you have resumed your full schedule
4. Return to full activities, including
 - a. Tests/Presentations
 - b. Catching up on missed work

Activity

1. Rest for a minimum of 24 hours after your injury
2. Ride a stationary bike for 20 minutes. Keep heart rate below 120 BPM. This may cause a light sweat.
3. Return to sport-specific activities, such as cutting or shooting drills
4. Return to non-contact practice
5. Return to full-contact practice
6. Return to game

Physiotherapy

Many people benefit from physiotherapy after a concussion. You may see any physiotherapist for this treatment, or your doctor may recommend one:

The following physiotherapy is recommended:

- Vestibulo-Ocular Rehabilitation
- Cervical spine
- Other _____

This handout was developed by Dr. Alyssa Cantarutti and follows the guidelines outlined in the 2016 Berlin Consensus and the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation Clinical Practice Guideline. Last updated April 2018

1. McCorry P, Meeuwisse W, Dvorak J et al. Consensus statement on concussion in sport – the 5th international conference on concussion in sport held in Berlin, October 2016. *Br J Sports Med* Published Online First: 26 April 2017. Doi: 10.1136/bjsports-2017-09769.

2. Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation. (2013, September). *Guidelines for Concussion/mTBI and Persistent Symptoms: Second Edition* [PDF]. Published online: http://onf.org/system/attachments/452/original/Complete_Guidelines_Oct_2017.pdf

Sleep

It is important for you to sleep well while your brain recovers from concussion. Try to achieve 8 hours of sleep every night.

We recommend good “sleep hygiene”, which means:

- waking up at the same time each day
- avoid daytime napping
- avoiding spending time in bed if not sleeping (do not eat, work, relax in bed)
- establish a routine that you go through every night before bed in a predictable pattern
- sleep in a cool environment with a warm blanket
- ensure your bed is comfortable
- sleep in a dark room
- minimize noise
- avoid caffeine 6 hours before bedtime

Your doctor may suggest that you take a supplement (available over the counter) to help with sleep²:

- Melatonin 2-5 mg 30 minutes before bed
- Zinc 12mg/day (Female) or 15mg/day (Male)
- Magnesium 200-300 mg/day
- Other _____

Rarely, your doctor may suggest using prescription sleep medication²

- Trazodone 12.5-100 mg po at hs prn for sleep

Avoid using prescription sleep medication unless you have discussed this specifically with your doctor.

Diet

Studies show a balanced diet helps with recovery.

Avoid junk food and alcohol.

Mindfulness

Consider a mindfulness or meditation practice to help reduce anxiety.

Your doctor may suggest helpful resources: _____

Follow-Up

We will check back in on _____.

The following are reasons to seek **urgent attention**

- Changes in behavior
- Symptoms worsening or new symptoms developing
- Double vision
- Numbness or tingling
- Severe headache
- Vomiting
- Seizure

You should not take any medication unless you have already discussed this with your doctor.

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