

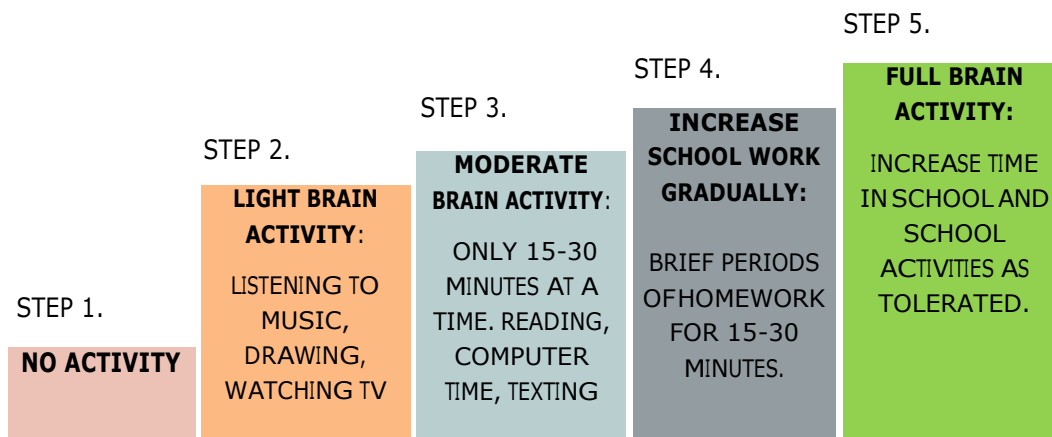


Return to Learn After a Concussion

(If you think your child has suffered a concussion, call your Doctor to be seen.)

Concussions are treated like any other sports injury – rest leads to recovery. Each child's recovery process is different and requires gradual returning to activity as tolerated. If a child has another traumatic brain injury while recovering from a concussion, he or she can have lasting brain deficits. If a child tries to push through concussion symptoms rather than resting, the time to full recovery can lengthen.

Families need to work together with their physicians, teachers, coaches, and schools to help their children recover from a concussion. Balancing between rest and activity is essential in the recovery process. It is important for your child not to take any medications (including over-the-counter medications) without first consulting your child's physician.



Concussion Symptoms

- Physical symptoms: headache, nausea/vomiting, sensitivity to light or sound, dizziness, blurry vision, tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Sleep difficulties (problems falling asleep, sleeping more or less than usual, fatigue)
- Cognitive symptoms: difficulty learning new information or paying attention, problems finding words, "fogginess" (difficulty thinking clearly)
- Change in mood: increased irritability, depression or sadness, anxiousness, change in personality

Return to Learn Step-by-Step Plan

(Before returning to learn your child should be seen by their Physician.)

Step 1. Complete physical and brain rest. "Brain rest" includes no use of cell phones, video games, computers, TV or books/homework. All of these activities make the brain work hard and can elicit concussion symptoms.

Step 2. Light "brain activity" may be started when symptoms have resolved at rest. This may include listening to music, watching television, or doing artwork/drawing.

Step 3: Moderate "brain activity" includes activities such as pleasurable reading, computer time, or texting. These activities may be resumed as tolerated – initially it may be for only 15-30 minutes at a time. Once concussion symptoms start to occur, the activity should be stopped and the child should rest until symptoms go away. Once he or she is tolerating short periods of these activities, they may be lengthened; if symptoms recur, he or she needs to take a break and may resume activity if symptoms resolve within 30 minutes of stopping the activity.

Step 4: Increase school-related activities gradually. Once moderate "brain activities" at home are tolerated well, activities such as homework may be attempted. Start with brief periods of work (15-30 minutes at a time) and increase as tolerated.

Step 5: Return to school. Once children can tolerate 1-2 hours of homework at home, they may be ready to return to school with a modified schedule. Examples include starting back for a half-day at a time, participating only in class without reading or note taking, and having extra time to complete assignments. It is important to coordinate with teachers and the school about this – sometimes a 504 plan is required/helpful for severe concussions. If symptoms develop during class or while at school, your child should take a break from the activity/class until symptoms resolve; preferably in a quiet, darker space (i.e. nurse's office). Time in school and school activities may be increased as tolerated.
