



Both Return-to-School and Return-to-Sport / Physical Activity Strategies can be done in parallel.
 However, the Return-to-School Strategy should be completed before starting Step 4 of the Return-to-Sport / Physical Activity Strategy.

This tool is a guideline for managing a student's return to sport or other physical activity following a concussion and does not replace medical advice. Every concussion is unique, and recovery is different for each student. Timelines and activities may vary based on direction from a doctor, nurse practitioner, or licenced health care professional with relevant training.

RETURN-TO-SPORT / PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

	STEP ①	STEP ②		STEP ③	ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A MEDICAL CLEARANCE BEFORE MOVING TO STEP 4	STEP ④	STEP ⑤	STEP ⑥
NAME & GOAL OF EACH STEP	Activities of daily living and relative rest Gradual reintroduction of typical activities as tolerated	2A: Light effort aerobic activity Increase heart rate	2B: Moderate effort aerobic activity Increase heart rate	Individual sport-specific activities Increase the intensity of aerobic activities and introduce low-risk sport specific movements		Non-contact training drills and activities Resume usual intensity of exercise, coordination, and activity-related cognitive skills	Return to all non-competitive activities Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff	Return to game play and/or competition Continued assessment of athletic performance
ACCEPTABLE ACTIVITIES	Doing activities at home that do not result in more than mild* and brief** worsening of symptoms such as: • Social interactions • Light walking • Preparing meals • Housework • Simple board and/or card games	• Exercising up to approx. 55% of max heart rate • Resuming light resistance training • Engaging in light aerobic exercise such as: o Walking/jogging o Stationary cycling	• Gradually increasing tolerance and intensity of aerobic activities • Exercising up to approx. 70% of max heart rate • Taking breaks and modifying activities as needed	Practicing sport-specific drills individually and supervised by a teacher/coach/parent • Skating drills (hockey) • Running drills (soccer) • Shooting drills (basketball) • Change of direction drills • Individual activities in physical education class		• Participating in recess activities and physical education class with no body contact • Progressing to higher intensity activities • Progressing to more challenging drills and activities such as: o Passing drills o Multi-player training	Progressing to higher risk activities such as: • Typical training activities • Full-contact sport practices • Full participation in physical education class activities	Full participation in any physical activity, practice, game, or sport competition.
ACTIVITIES TO BE AVOIDED	• Minimize screen time • No alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and no other stimulant use Avoid driving during the first 24-48 hours after a concussion	• No heavy resistance training that may result in more than mild* and brief** worsening of symptoms • No training drills or team/group practice • No physical activities which involve using sporting equipment	• No high-risk recess activities such as: o Dodgeball • No activities involving head impacts such as: o Heading soccer balls	• No full participation in physical education class and intramural activities • No activities involving body contact. o Hockey, football, or rugby o Judo/wrestling		• No participation in any competitive activity		
TIMELINE	After a maximum of 24-48 hours after the injury, Begin STEP 2	Able to tolerate moderate aerobic activities for 24 hours? No: Reattempt STEP 2 Yes: Begin STEP 3	Able to complete the Return-to-school Strategy and tolerate individual sport specific activities without any symptoms for 24 hours? No: Reattempt Step 3 Yes: Obtain a medical clearance	Able to tolerate usual intensity of non-contact training drills and activities for 24 hours with no return of symptoms? No: Return to Step 3 Yes: Begin Step 5		Able to tolerate non-competitive, high-risk activities for 24 hours with no return of symptoms? No: Return to Step 3 Yes: Begin Step 6	Able to tolerate competitive activities for 24 hours with no return of symptoms? No: Return to Step 3 Yes: The Return-to-Sport / Physical Activity Strategy is completed	

Each step must take a minimum of 24 hours but could last longer depending on the severity and type of symptoms present. It's acceptable for symptoms to worsen slightly with activity during Steps 1-3, so long as the exacerbation is mild* and brief**. If the student's symptoms worsen more than this, they should stop the activity and reattempt the same step the next day. *Mild exacerbation (worsening) of symptoms: No more than a 2-point increase when compared with the pre-activity value on a 1-10-point symptom severity scale. **Brief exacerbation of symptoms: Worsening of symptoms for up to 1 hour. Students experiencing concussion symptoms after their medical clearance (e.g., during Steps 4 to 6) should return to Step 3 to establish full resolution of symptoms with exertion before engaging in at-risk activities.