



Both Return-to-Work and Return-to-Sport / Physical Activity Strategies can be done in parallel.

However, the Return-to-Work Strategy should be completed before starting Step 4 of the Return-to-Sport / Physical Activity Strategy.

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR RESUMING ACTIVITIES AFTER A CONCUSSION, PLEASE CONSULT THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS DOCUMENT.

RETURN TO-WORK				
	STEP A	STEP B	STEP C	STEP D
NAME & GOAL OF EACH STEP	Activities of daily living and relative rest Gradual reintroduction of typical activities as tolerated	Work activities as tolerated Increase tolerance to work-related activities and connect socially with peers/colleagues	Part-time or full-time days at work with accommodations (as needed) Gradually reduce accommodations and increase workload	Return to work full-time Return to full days at work without requiring accommodations
ACCEPTABLE ACTIVITIES	Activities at home that do not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social interactions • Light walking • Preparing meals • Housework • Simple board and/or card games Consider contacting the workplace to discuss a tailored Return-to-Work plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading or other light cognitive activities at work (or at home if possible). • Take breaks and adapt activities if they result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms. • Screen time may be gradually resumed, as tolerated. • May engage in light effort aerobic activity. Consult the Return-to-Sport/Physical Activity Strategy for more information about the recommended steps for a return to usual physical exertion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradually reintroduce work activities according to the tailored Return-to-Work plan. • Individuals may continue to require workplace accommodations such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Available breaks throughout the day ◦ Extra time for tasks ◦ Access to a quiet distraction-free work environment Accommodations can be phased out in "trial" periods, to ensure that they are no longer needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to usual expectations for productivity at work. Note: Individuals should be cleared by a doctor, nurse practitioner, or licenced healthcare professional before returning to job duties that may have safety implications for you or others (e.g., operating heavy equipment, working from heights).
ACTIVITIES TO BE AVOIDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize screen time. • No alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and no other stimulant use Avoid driving during the first 24–48 hours after a concussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No intense physical exertion or sports • Avoid medically unnecessary delays in progression through the Return-to-Work plan. • Limit alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and no other stimulant use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid high-risk job duties. • Avoid possible overexertion. 	
TIMELINE	After a maximum of 24 – 48 hours after the injury, Begin Step B	Able to tolerate work with accommodations for at least 24 hours? No: Reattempt Step B Yes: Begin Step C	Able to tolerate full days without concussion-related accommodations for at least 24 hours? No: Reattempt Step C Yes: Begin Step D	Able to tolerate a full workload without accommodations for at least 24 hours? No: Reattempt Step D Yes: The Return-to-Work Strategy is completed

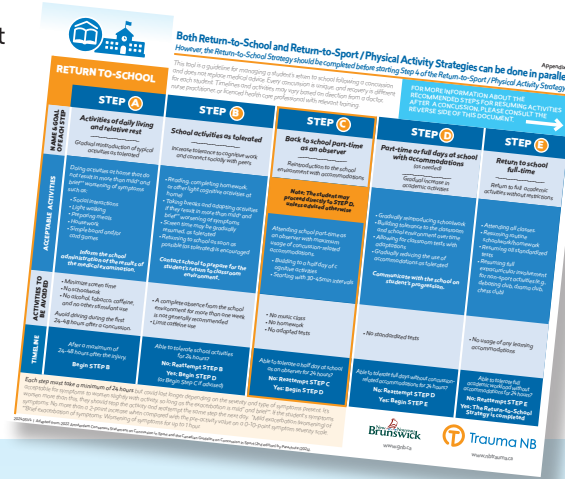
Each step must take a minimum of 24 hours but could last longer depending on the severity and type of symptoms present. It's acceptable for symptoms to worsen slightly with activity, so long as the exacerbation is mild* and brief**. If the person's symptoms worsen more than this, they should stop the 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 0-10-point symptom severity scale. **Brief exacerbation of symptoms: Worsening of symptoms for up to 1 hour.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

All workers diagnosed with a concussion should follow a Return-to-Work Strategy and a Return-to-Sport/Physical Activity Strategy to help guide their return to usual daily activity, especially if they engage in activities such as full-contact sport practices and/or competitive gameplay. It's important to note that both strategies begin at the same time, can be done in parallel and the first step of both is the same.

Medical clearance will be required before returning to any activities that pose risk of physical contact, collision or fall. A medical clearance may also be required before returning to job duties that may have safety implications (e.g., operating heavy equipment, working from heights). For more information about each of the recommended steps for a gradual return to usual physical exertion, consult the Return-to-Sport/Physical Activity Strategy.

This strategy along with other available concussion-related resources can be found online at www.nbtrauma.ca.



INDIVIDUALIZED WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS

People do not need to be symptom-free to return to the workplace and complete absence from work of more than one week is not recommended. Therefore, knowing the signs and symptoms and how to properly manage a diagnosed concussion is critical in a person's recovery. It may be important to use concussion-related accommodations at the workplace to facilitate the progression through certain steps of the Return-to-Work Strategy. We encourage you to keep an open line of communication with your employer and/or supervisor to help identify what accommodations would best support your recovery according to your tailored Return-to-Work plan.

POST-CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS	IMPACT ON LEARNING	POTENTIAL STRATEGIES AND/OR APPROACHES
Headache and fatigue	Difficulty concentrating, paying attention or multitasking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure to drink fluids as needed to help avoid possible dehydration. Allow the person to take frequent breaks and/or rest in a quiet area. Provide alternative assessment opportunities.
Difficulty remembering or processing speed	Difficulty remembering new information, instructions and learned information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of a daily organizer. Divide assignments into smaller tasks. Allow for extra time to complete work-related tasks.
Difficulty paying attention and/or concentrating	Limited ability to focus on work-related tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep distractions to a minimum. Reduce and/or prioritize assignments and other work-related tasks. Consult instructions and check frequently to ensure comprehension.
Light and/or noise sensitivity	Difficulty working in a certain environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the brightness and exposure to smart boards, computers, and television screens. Allow the person to wear sunglasses or use earplugs as needed. Arrange strategic seating (i.e., away from window or noisy environments).

PARALLEL STEPS FOR RESUMING ACTIVITIES AFTER A CONCUSSION

RETURN TO WORK STRATEGY

RETURN TO SPORT/ PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY

- A** Activities of daily living and relative rest
- B** Work activities as tolerated
- C** Part-time or full days at work with accommodations (as needed)
- D** Return to work full-time

- 1** Activities of daily living and relative rest
- 2** Light to moderate effort aerobic activity
- 3** Individual sport-specific activities

MEDICAL CLEARANCE

IMPORTANT:

If the person experiences concussion symptoms after medical clearance (i.e., during STEPS 4 to 6), they should return to STEP 3 to establish full resolution of symptoms.

Medical clearance will be required again before progressing to STEP 4.

- 4** Non-contact training drills and activities
- 5** Return to all non-competitive activities
- 6** Return to game play and/or competition