

Return-to-Play Recommendations*

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If it is suspected that an athlete has had a concussion, the parents should call the athlete's primary care physician as soon as possible to alert them of the concussion. The parent should also make a follow-up appointment with their physician or with a specialty clinic for a time within the first week after the concussion.

Stage	Activity	Functional Exercise	Objective Stage
1	No physical activity as long as there are symptoms. <i>(This stage could take days or even weeks)</i>	Complete physical rest. Quiet time with maximum rest.	Recover
<i>When 100% symptom-free for 24 hours, proceed to Stage 2</i>			
2	Light Aerobic Activity	Walking, swimming, stationary bike, 10-15 minutes of non-resistance exercise. Quiet play alone or with parent.	Increase heart rate. Light to moderate workout not requiring cognitive attention or coordination.
<i>If symptoms reemerge, then return to previous stage. If athlete remains symptom-free for 24 hours after this level of exertion, then proceed to next stage.</i>			
3	Sport-Specific Exercise	Exercise for up to 30 minutes. No weight lifting and head contact. Supervised play, low risk activities.	Add movements requiring increased attention & coordination.
<i>If symptoms reemerge, then return to previous stage. If athlete remains symptom-free for 24 hours after this level of exertion, then proceed to next stage.</i>			
4	Non-Contact Training Drills	Progression to more complex training drills, may start progressive resistance training, including running or jumping as tolerated.	Exercise that mimics athlete's sport without risk of head injury.
<i>If symptoms reemerge, then return to previous stage. If athlete remains symptom-free for 24 hours after this level of exertion, then proceed to next stage.</i>			
5	Full-Contact Practice	Following MEDICAL CLEARANCE, participate in normal training activities with parental/adult supervisions; full exertion.	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff or family.
<i>If symptoms reemerge, then return to previous stage. If athlete remains symptom-free for 24 hours after this level of exertion, then proceed to next stage.</i>			
6	Return to Play.	Normal game play.	No restrictions.

For more information, contact the sports medicine team at Rocky Mountain Orthopaedic Associates at 242-3535

*From Rocky Mountain Youth Sports Medicine Institutes, Center for Concussion REAP Project (rockymountainhospitalforchildren.com/sports-medicine/concussion-management/reap-guidelines.htm)