

Otonabee Minor Hockey

Concussion Return to Sport Protocol

A Concussion is a serious event, but you can recover fully from such an injury if the brain is given enough time to rest and recuperate. The return to sport process is gradual and begins after a doctor has given the player clearance to return to activity. If any symptoms/signs return during this process, the player must be re-evaluated by a physician. Each step must take a minimum of one day, but could last longer depending on the player and his or her specific situation. Remember, symptoms may return later that day or the next, not necessarily when exercising!

**\*A DOCTOR'S NOTE IS MANDATORY TO RETURN TO SPORT**

***Step 1: Symptom Limited Activity***

After an initial short period of rest of 24-48 hours, light cognitive and physical activity can be initiated as long as they don’t worsen symptoms. A physician, preferably one with experience managing concussions, should be consulted before beginning a step-wise return to learn and sport strategy.

***Step 2: Light Aerobic Exercise***

Activities such as walking or stationary cycling. The player should be supervised by someone who can help monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting. The duration and intensity of the aerobic exercise can be gradually increased over time if no symptoms or signs return during the exercise or the next day.

Symptoms? Return to previous stage and only engage in activities as tolerated. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

No symptoms? Proceed to Step 3 the next day.

***Step 3: Sport-Specific Activities***

Activities such as skating or throwing can begin at step 3. There should be no body contact or other jarring motions such as high-speed stops or hitting a baseball with a bat.

Symptoms? Return to previous stage and only engage in activities as tolerated. If symptoms persist consult a physician.

No symptoms? Proceed to Step 4 the next day.

***Step 4: Begin drills without body contact***

Symptoms? Return to previous stage and only engage in activities as tolerated. If symptoms persist consult a physician.

No symptoms? The time needed to progress from non-contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and with the player. Proceed to Step 5 only after medical clearance.

***Step 5: “On Field” practice with body contact, once cleared by a doctor***

Symptoms? Return to previous stage and only engage in activities as tolerated. If symptoms persist consult a physician.

No symptoms? Proceed to Step 6 the next day.

***Step 6: Game play***.