

## Graduated Return to Play Guidelines

<b>Rehabilitation stage</b>	<b>Functional exercise at each stage of rehabilitation</b>	<b>Objective of each stage</b>
No Activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest	Recovery
Light Aerobic Exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity <70% maximum predicted heart rate No Resistance training	Increased Heart Rate
Sport Specific Exercise	Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer. No head impact activities	Add Movement
Non-Contact Training Drills	Progression to more complex training drills, Such as passing drills in football and ice hockey May start progressive resistance training	Exercise, coordination, and cognitive load
Full Contact Practice	Following medical clearance: Participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
Return to Play	Normal game play	

As the baseline step of the Return to Play Progression, the athlete needs to have completed physical and cognitive rest and not be experiencing concussion symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours. Keep in mind, the younger the athlete, the more conservative the treatment

It is important to monitor symptoms and cognitive function carefully during each increase of exertion. Athletes should only progress to the next level of exertion if they are not experiencing symptoms at the current level. If symptoms return at any step, an athlete should stop these activities as this may be a sign the athlete is pushing too hard. Only after additional rest, when the athlete is once again not experiencing symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours, should he or she start again at the previous step during which symptoms were experienced.

The Return to Play Progression process is best conducted through a team approach and by a health professional who knows the athlete's physical abilities and endurance. By gauging the athlete's performance on each individual step, a health care professional will be able to determine how far to progress the athlete on a given day. In some cases, the athlete may be able to work through one step in a single day, while in other cases it may take several days to work through an individual step. It may take several weeks to months to work through the entire progression.