

Concussion- Return to Activity

After a concussion, turn off the brain. Spend at least 48 hours away from brain, social, and physical activity. This means no school, outdoor play, homework, tv, video games, reading, or going to events. Rest the brain and the body in a quiet room with no distractions. Sometimes it takes longer than 48 hours. You will work with your child's doctor to make this time as short as possible without making concussion symptoms worse.

After 48 hours, begin low-risk brain activity for fun (reading, tv, drawing, board games). Do not try homework or video games. Stop as soon as symptoms get worse. You may only be able to do 5-10 minutes at first. Do not do more than 45 minutes at one time, or more than 2 hours total during the day. See the doctor when able to do 45 minutes of brain activity in one sitting without getting worse. It is time to start a slow school return. It is NOT ok to return to physical activity like gym class or recess yet.

When your child can attend a full day of school, *without any concussion symptoms*, see the doctor to talk about activities like outdoor play, gym class, and recess.

Use the steps below to return to activity. It starts with activities which have a low risk for head injury, then slowly adds higher risk activities at the end. Spend _____ days on each step (depends on child's age). If symptoms return, stop all activity for 24 hours, then start one step earlier than the one which caused symptoms.

Step 1 – Free play doing low-risk activities for 15-20 minutes. Safe activities include tag, hide and seek, walking the dog, or swimming in a non-crowded pool. NO diving board, climbing, riding a bike, or using a ball.

Step 2 – Same as step 1, but may play longer, work harder, run faster.

Step 3 – May begin playing with a ball, jumping off a low diving board, lifting heavy objects, and going to crowded pools. NO contact play (wrestling with friends or siblings) or climbing.

Step 4 – May add wrestling and climbing low playground equipment. NO sports which require a helmet (bike, skateboard). NO climbing anything taller than you.

Step 5 – May do all activity, including those requiring a helmet and climbing tall playground equipment or trees.