

Return to Learn/ Return to Play Protocols

Compliant with Illinois State Law 099-0245

What to do when a concussion is suspected?

- Once a student is pulled from a contest because of a suspected concussion,
 - He/she cannot return unless an athletic trainer is on sight and gives them permission to return.
 - If there is no athletic trainer on sight, he/she will not be allowed to return to play. At this point, the student will need to see a doctor and begin the concussion protocols.
 - Students will not be allowed to start the concussion protocols until a physician clears them to begin. We cannot expedite this process without physician's consent.
 - Even if a student says they are okay to return to play, once they have been removed from activity because of a suspected concussion, they may not return until going through the protocols.
- Coaches are responsible to **communicate with parents at the first available opportunity after an incident occurred.**
 - Coaches should communicate the facts of the situation and make no effort to diagnose whether or not they believe the student is concussed.
 - Coaches must share the Post-Concussion Consent Form for RTL/RTP.
 - Coaches should keep these forms in their coaching bags on the sideline and hand to parents when applicable.
 - Forms will also be available
 - on the athletic websites as a pdf download.
 - in the nurses' offices
 - in the main office at GMS and the Athletic Office and Training Room at GHS
 - All Consent forms must be turned into the nurse at the student's school. A copy will be given to other appropriate parties, such as athletic trainer, coaches, and teachers.
- Coaches are responsible to **communicate with the school nurse and athletic trainer** (if applicable) **in a timely manner.**
- The same procedures apply for suspected concussions in school and at practices.

Hypothetical Example:

- A runner falls and hits his head during a cross country practice on Saturday morning. The runner has a headache. No trainer is present. The coach would pull the runner out of practice. After practice, the coach calls mom, who comes to get her son. Coach explains what happened and hands her the Post-Concussion Consent Form. The coach tells mom that our concussion protocol requires that her son see a physician before returning to school and participating in activities. On Monday, the student shows up at school and goes to his first hour class. Because the coach contacted the athletic trainer and the nurse over the weekend, they check attendance and see that he is in class. He is pulled from class. He had not been to see a physician about his concussion and said he is fine. The nurse contacts his parents and explain that he must see a physician before returning to class.

Concussion Protocols for Return to Learn (RTL) & Return to Play (RTP)

Return to Learn

Who determines Accommodations??

- Medical Doctor
- Healthcare Staff (nurse, athletic trainer)
- But, mostly by the student communicating with the healthcare staff daily

Step 1 – Minimal Activity; No School

- Rest

Step 2 – Begin Accommodated School Days

- ½ day of school
- Allow to rest in nurse's office
- Allow for any accommodations
- No classwork
- May attempt homework in 20 minute intervals

Advances to Step 3 when

- Can complete a full day with minimal symptoms
 - Should try to extend school day daily
- Accommodations are reduced
- Can complete most classes without needing to rest
- Can complete at least an hour of homework

Step 3 – Full Day of School with Accommodations

- Allow to rest in nurse's office
- Allow for any accommodations
- Begin classwork
- Athletes will take ImPACT Test, if asymptomatic for full day of school

Advances to Step 4 when

- Is asymptomatic for a full day of school
- No Accommodations
- No need to rest
- Asymptomatic with full homework/classwork
- Completed any tests/quizzes**
- Athletes will have regained their ImPACT baseline score

Step 4 – Students Return to Full Cognitive Activity

- Full day of school
- Full classwork
- Athletes will begin the Return to Play Protocol
- Return to physical education

Advances to Step 5 and is released from care when

- Is asymptomatic for a full day of school
- No Accommodations

Return to Play

- Once an athlete has been cleared by a Physician to begin a functional progression, they may begin with Step 1. Typically, the following will have occurred:
 - The RTL has been completed or near completion
 - Has resumed ImPACT baseline scores**
 - Only if you utilize
 - If not, permission from treating medical doctor to proceed
- Must be asymptomatic for greater than 24 hours
- Each step will be assigned an activity
- Athlete should report pre and post of each step
 - For symptom checking
- Each step should begin 24 hours apart
- Documentation should be maintained and placed in treatment file
- If symptomatic – stop activity and rest for 24 hours before resuming
 - Begin at same step
 - You may wish to consult the treating medical doctor
- If symptomatic for two steps or the same step twice discontinue RTP and consult treating doctor

Return to Play Steps

Step 1 - Light Activity

- Example: 10 - 15 minutes of biking or jogging.

Step 2 - Moderate Activity

- Example: 10 min Jog followed by sprints, route running, shooting, stand-ups without a partner

Step 3 - Sports Performance Training

- Example: 10 burpees 9 burpees Progress all the way down to 1 of each exercise.
 10 V- Sit-ups 9 V- Sit-ups
 10 Air Squats 9 Air Squats
 10 Pushups 9 Push-ups

Step 4 - Return to Contact Practice

Step 5 - Return to Full Activity/Competition

- In order to return to a sporting event the athlete must have attended a full regular contact practice the previous day.
- Once the athlete has completed the above stages fully without return of any symptoms, he/she is considered cleared to return to full competition.

PE Return to Play Protocols

- PE Return to Play Protocols are very similar to the Return to Play steps listed already listed.

- The PE RTP form will be available as a separate document.

Resources:

- [Concussion Information Sheet](#)
- [Post-Concussion Consent Form \(RTL/RTP\)](#)