

## Return to Sports and Activities After a Concussion

After your child has been diagnosed with a concussion, they should have 1 to 2 days of rest before starting the steps below. During this time, your child should relax at home. This handout tells you the steps your child needs to take before going back to sports.

### Steps for returning to sports

Your child should follow each step listed below for **at least 1 day** before moving to the next step. **If any of your child's concussion symptoms get worse, stop that activity.** Then go back to having your child do the activities in the step before for the rest of that day. Try moving to the next step again the next day. By doing these activities, your child can slowly start doing sports again after a concussion.

Talk with your child's school, gym teacher, and sports coaches about these steps before your child returns to activities. Your child's care team will give you a note explaining this information to gym teachers and coaches.

#### **Step 1: Have your child do activities at home that do not give them symptoms.**

Have your child try activities like walking short distances. Your child can slowly spend more time doing these activities if they do not make their symptoms worse.

#### **Step 2: Have your child do light aerobic exercise like walking.**

Have your child try exercises that increase their heart rate, like walking, jogging, or using a stationary bike cycling at a slow to medium pace. Your child can return to gym classes for non-contact activities. Your child should not return to playgrounds yet.

#### **Step 3: Have your child do sport-specific exercises.**

Have your child try activities that they would normally do in the sport that they play. This could include things like running or conditioning. **Do not have them try any contact drills or activities where they may bump or hit their head again.**

#### **Step 4: Have your child do harder training drills.**

Have your child try harder training drills in their sport, like passing drills if they play soccer. **Do not have them try any contact drills or activities where they may bump or hit their head again.**

#### **Step 5: Have your child fully do the practice as they normally would.**

Have your child return to normal team practices. They may also compete in scrimmages with in their own team. **Do not let your child return to play competitive games at this step.**

#### **Step 6: Have your child fully return to playing the sport as they normally would.**

They may now also return to recess and playgrounds. Talk with your child's care team to get clearance to return to competitive sports.

If your child still has concussion symptoms after two weeks, please tell your pediatrician. They can send a referral to **Stanford Medicine Children's Health** by calling **(650) 723-0993**.