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## Management of a Concussed Athlete

### Step 1 – Initial Assessment and Rest

The athlete is removed from competition and on-field/sideline assessment completed by athletic trainer or team physician. If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will begin the concussion protocol. · Athletes should have complete physical rest and relative cognitive rest for 24 to 48 hours. · Parent/guardian should monitor signs and symptoms (see “Home Instructions”)

- Keep TV, texting, computers, radio, bright lights, loud noises, and reading to a minimal level.
- Team or family physician is notified and recommended plan is shared.

### Step 2 – Return to School Progression

The athlete will undergo a follow-up assessment with the athletic trainer on or before post-injury day 3. · Once the athlete is asymptomatic with typical daily activities, he or she may return to school. · If an activity increases symptoms, the athlete should stop and rest until symptoms resolve. · Each phase below is expected to take 24 hours (or longer). An athlete must be symptom-free before progressing to the next phase.

- If an athlete has not returned to school by post-injury day 4, a referral to the team or family physician is made.

Symptom-free with physical rest and relative cognitive rest	Date:
Return to ½ day of school – (can be combined with rest day if asymptomatic)	Date:
Return to full day of school – (best case scenario post-injury day 2)	Date:

### Step 3 – Return to Sports Progression

The athlete will undergo an additional follow-up assessment with the athletic trainer before progressing to full practice (no earlier than day 6 after the concussion).

- Each phase below is expected to take 24 hours (or longer). An athlete must be symptom-free before progressing to the next phase.
- If an athlete has not returned to practice by in a reasonable timeframe (typically 14 days), a referral to a concussion-trained physician specialist is made.

Light aerobic exercise (best case scenario post-injury day 2)	Date:
Sport-specific activities (best case scenario post-injury day 3)	Date:

Non-contact sports drills (best case scenario post-injury day 4)	Date:
Return to practice including contact (best case scenario post-injury day 5)	Date:

<b>Step 4 – Full Clearance</b>	
The athlete will undergo a final clearance assessment with the athletic trainer before progressing to unrestricted participation in games or matches.	
Return to games/matches (best case scenario post-injury day 6)	Date:



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## Home Instructions for Parents & Athletes after a Concussion

Concussions are head injuries that require careful monitoring by parents, coaches, athletes, and a trained medical team. Our goal is to provide thorough assessments and communication through the recovery process.

In some instances, the signs and symptoms of a concussion may not become obvious until several hours or even days after the injury. The athlete should have physical rest and relative cognitive rest for a few days. Please carefully monitor your son/daughter for the signs and symptoms listed below.

Seek medical attention at the nearest emergency department, or call 911, if the following are present:

- Headaches that increase in intensity
- Repeated vomiting
- Weakness or numbness in arms or legs
- Drowsiness or inability to be awakened
- Unusual behavior, confusion, irritable
- Unsteadiness when standing
- Inability to recognize people or places
- Seizure activity
- Slurred speech

Rest should be continued until all signs and symptoms have resolved. Relative cognitive rest means limiting TV, texting, computers, radio, bright lights, loud noises, and reading to a level that does not cause symptoms. In most cases after a few days of rest, athletes should gradually increase their daily activities as long as their symptoms do not worsen. They should return to school when all signs and symptoms have resolved with typical daily activities.

Once an athlete returns to school without symptoms, the return to play progression can begin. Each phase is expected to take at least 24 hours and can be longer. If any symptoms worsen while exercising, the athlete simply repeats the previous step.

It is important to realize that a concussion or head injury, in general, will not resolve in a typical linear fashion. Meaning that “on day 2 you have this and by day 7 you should be here,” as is common with other general orthopedic injuries. The head is mysterious and responds differently for each individual person. When they do occur you should regress to the previous step in this process and begin again.

<b>It's okay to:</b>	<b>There is no need to:</b>	<b>Do NOT:</b>
Use an ice pack on head/neck	Check eyes with flashlight	Drink alcohol
Go to sleep	Wake up frequently (unless instructed)	Engage in mental activities that increase symptoms
Rest	Test reflexes	Engage in physical exercise
	Stay in bed	Drive a car when symptomatic

Adapted from:  
 Davis, et al. Br J Sports Med 2017  
 Broglio, et al. NATA Position Statement 2014  
 CDC Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents