

Return to Learn/Play

Return to Learn Guidelines

1. Complete cognitive rest until symptom free for 24 hours without medication.
2. Then complete 3-4 hours of schoolwork at home in one day over multiple 20-30 minute sessions or as instructed by a physician.
3. If there are no symptoms then and into the following day, the student may return to school.

Return to Play Protocol

1. Full day in school without symptoms
2. Complete Return to Learn guidelines without symptoms and medication
3. Obtain physician clearance to begin protocol and 1st page of AT-18 form. ***This is a mandated protocol by the FHSAA.***
4. Light aerobic exercise – increase heart rate
5. Sport-Specific Drills – increase intensity, begin agility, weights, and functional exercise
6. Non-contact practice activities
7. Full contact practice activities
8. ImPACT test with scores within normal limits (if applicable)
9. Obtain physician clearance and 2nd page of AT-18 form.
10. Full, unrestricted game play

Each step is separated by 24 hours. If symptoms occur, the athlete will drop back to the previous level and try again after 24 hours

Any physician clearance notes inconsistent with our protocol may not be accepted and our supervising physician will be consulted

It is OK to:

- Sleep, REST is crucial for recovery!
- Eat a light diet as tolerated
- Use ice pack as needed
- Take Tylenol (NOT ibuprofen, aspirin, etc) as needed for headaches

There is No Need to:

- Isolate them in a dark room
- After monitoring your child closely for 4 hours from the time of injury, there is no need to wake him/her every hour.

ImPACT® Testing

The ImPACT® (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) is a 25-minute software program set up like a video game to test memory, reaction time, and brain processing speed. When possible, a pre-season baseline test may be taken to compare to a post-concussive test. When post-concussive scores return back to normal, the test can aid in return to play decision-making. The ImPACT test should ***NEVER*** be the only test to determine whether an athlete can return to play. www.impacttest.com

More Information

For more information about concussions and how to manage them, please visit one of the following websites:

www.cdc.gov/concussion

Concussion Information

General Information, Concussion Management, Return to Learn / Play Protocol



Serving Manatee and
Sarasota County Public
Schools

All information based on research and original work by:
Jeremy Ng, MD
Neno Bartocci, ATC/L
Erica Buehning, MS, ATC/L

General Information

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury that affects brain chemistry and function, typically caused by any hit or action that causes the head to quickly rotate or change directions (you do not have to get hit in the head to have a concussion). This causes an energy crisis where the brain is requiring more energy to repair itself, however, the body cannot supply enough energy to the brain because of the injury.

Any activities that increase the energy demand on the brain (such as concentrating on school work or video screens, physical activity, etc) will increase the symptoms of the concussion and lengthen the amount of time it takes to fully recover.

It is important to note that while some concussion symptoms appear immediately, other symptoms may not appear until hours or days after the injury happens. Receiving another head injury before this injury heals can potentially lead to severe and permanent brain damage.

Concussion Management

Common Symptoms of a Concussion:

- Headache/Head Pressure
- Nausea / vomiting
- Dizziness/Balance problems
- Blurred Vision
- Sensitivity to light / noise
- Abnormal emotional state
- Feeling "foggy" or "off"
- Memory or concentration issues
- Fatigue
- Sleeping more/less than usual

Immediate Management

If not immediately done so, be sure to notify your child's Athletic Trainer or the treating physician of the injury so a proper evaluation can be done.

The most important aspect of the recovery process is immediate, complete cognitive (mental) and physical rest. This means no physical activity, school, homework, video games, texting, internet use, etc. Television is often fine. The athlete will remain on cognitive rest until all symptoms have gone away for 24 hours.

Signs of a More Serious Injury:

Go to the emergency room or call 911 immediately if any of the following occur, your child should be evaluated for a more serious, life-threatening brain injury, such as a brain bleed, brain contusion, skull fracture, etc.:

- Severe unrelenting or worsening headache
- Persistent or worsening confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Impaired or declining consciousness
- Increasing lethargy, difficult to awaken
- Loss of coordination/noticeable difficulty walking
- Seizures/convulsions
- Vision changes
- Slurred speech
- Repetitive vomiting
- Numb, tingling, or weak in an arm, leg, hand or foot
- Loss of control of bowel/bladder
- Difficulty or unable to waken
- Clear fluid from nose or ears
- Any other new concerning issues arise

A CT scan or MRI can never diagnose a concussion. These tests are used to diagnose more severe, life threatening head/neck injuries.