

Gradual Return to Sport

When an athlete is returning to sport, they should follow a stepwise progression managed by a health care provider with increasing amounts of exercise. **Make sure there is at least 24 hours between each step.**

Step 1

Symptom Limited Activity

May do daily activities that do not worsen symptoms.

Goal: Gradual reintroduction of work/school activities.



Step 2

Light Aerobic Exercise

May do walking/stationary bike at slow to medium pace. No resistance training.

Goal: Increased heart rate.

Step 3

Sport Specific Exercise

May do running or skating drills. No head impact activities.

Goal: Add movement



Step 4

Non-Contact Training Drills

May do harder training drills, i.e., passing drills. May start progressive resistance training (weights).

Goal: Exercise, coordination, and increased thinking.



Step 5

Full-Contact Practice

Following medical clearance, may participate in normal training activities.

Goal: Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff.



Return to Play/Sport Normal Game Play

Written clearance should be provided by a health care provider before the athlete begins the return-to-play protocol as directed by state laws and regulations.

If symptoms get worse during any stage, the athlete should go back to the previous stage until symptom free.

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