



# Sports Concussion Clinic

Center for Athletic Medicine

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## Return to Play Protocol

When returning athletes to play, they should follow a stepwise symptom-limited program of increased activity that is symptom free. Below is the recommended protocol that should be followed. Steps 2 through 5 should be done one day then wait until the next day before beginning the next step.

### 1. Rest until asymptomatic

Physically - no increased activity that would increase the heart rate  
Mentally allow the brain to rest. Minimize activities such as reading and video games that involve concentrating on an activity for a period of time. Also avoid noisy bright stimulating environments such as a hockey rink or basketball arena. Once all symptoms have cleared, move to the next step.

**If symptoms develop during any of the steps below, that activity should be stopped and the contact the clinic at 313-972- 4216 or 313-876-2526 before continuing with the protocol.**

### 2. Light aerobic exercise

After you are symptom free for 24 hours, try non - impact activities such as stationary bike, elliptical, or swimming for 20 – 30 minutes. Keep heart rate to 60% of its maximum heart rate. **(220 - your age x .60)**

### 3. Exercise (Day 2)

- Non Impact activity for 45 min.
- Combination of non impact and impact activities for 45 min.

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- Other activities as follows:

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### 4. Non-contact training (practice) drills

### 5. Full contact training after medical clearance (If not already given)

### 6. Return to competition (game play)

### Concussion Symptoms

- Headache
- Numbness or Tingling
- Neck Pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Blurred Vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Balance problems
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling slowed down
- Feeling like “in a fog”
- “Don’t feel right”
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty remembering
- Fatigue or low energy
- Confusion