

Return To Play Guidelines

What is a concussion?

A type of brain injury caused by a blow, “jolt” or bump to the head. It is a serious form of head trauma that requires proper attention and care, to prevent further injury and long term impairment.

If a concussion is suspected...

1. Athlete is pulled from play and **does not return same day**
2. Athlete should be **monitored by staff**, (teacher, counselor, nurse etc.) until accommodations can be made with parents/guardians and should not be left alone. Parents and/or student can be provided with **Shift’s “Post Injury Education” pamphlet** for more information
3. Athlete must see **Dr. Tom Lacroix** as soon as possible for early diagnosis and care instructions
4. After a visit with Dr. Lacroix, a rehabilitation protocol will be administered. Shift Concussion Certified Clinics and Practitioners are also available to offer additional support/rehabilitation if needed.
5. For the first 48-72 hours both **cognitive as well as physical rest are very important**. Athlete may be away from school or need academic accommodations upon their return.
6. Follow-up reporting regarding the athlete’s recovery and **required academic accommodations** are often provided when necessary (e.g. for school). Management may include; rest strategies, modified school requirements, specialized rehabilitative therapy, and other strategies.
7. **Prior to return-to-sport**, a progressive, individualized physical exertion (exercise) protocol should be carried out under supervision. This protocol includes several stages of increasing difficulty to ensure symptoms do not return.
Stage 1: Light Aerobic Activity (eg. walk, jog, cycle)
Stage 2: Heavier Cardiovascular Activity and Introduction of Basic Movement/Sport Specific Drills
Stage 3: On-ice Drills and Practice (non-contact)
Stage 4: Practice (Full Participation/Contact)
Stage 5: Full Sport Participation
8. Upon discharge from Dr. Lacroix’s care, a final return to play decision will be made and signing of any forms the school or team requires.



Signs & Symptoms

- Headache
- Pressure in Head
- Balance Problems
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Sensitivity to Light
- Sensitivity to Noise
- “Being in a fog”
- More Emotional
- Different Remembering
- Neck Pain
- Nausea & Vomiting
- Trouble Falling Asleep
- Dizziness
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Blurred Vision
- Nervous or Anxious