

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS DURING THE CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL OF CONCUSSION RECOVERY

STAGE	INFORMATION AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS...			FOR PARENTS...	FOR TEACHERS...	
	ENVIRONMENT	ACTIVITY	RESTRICTIONS			
AT-HOME RECOVERY STAGES	1	A quiet and dimly-lit room is the best atmosphere for full physical rest. It should be comfortable for sleep and extended periods of sitting. Students should follow additional instructions that were provided by their physician at the time of concussion diagnosis / examination.	No activity should take place during this time period. This includes physical activity along with any activities that are visually distracting or requiring of mental effort (cognitive exertion).	Bright lights, exposure to screens (including computer screens and personal electronic devices such as cell phones) should be avoided. Reading, excessive noise, and other visual or auditory distractions should be completely avoided.	Maintain a system of checking in with your child during his or her initial recovery process. This is extremely important as symptoms may continue to present themselves during this time period. After a diagnosis, contact your child's school to report the concussion formally.	
	2	A gradual and progressive re-introduction to natural light may be tolerable at this point. A quiet setting with no visual or auditory distractions is still very important to an individual recovering from a concussion related injury.	Tasks that do not cause discomfort or a return of symptoms may be permitted in moderation. However, an individual recovering from concussion should be carefully self-monitoring for symptoms related to his/her injury and should be mindful to avoid any strenuous physical or mental tasks.	Continue to avoid places and activities that involve excessive noise and bright light, exposure to screens and use of personal electronics. Avoidance of cognitive exertion is still recommended at this point. Most individuals do not proceed beyond this stage of recovery until 3 days post-injury.	Maintain frequent monitoring of your child. He or she may be showing opposition, insisting that they are feeling fine. Emphasize the importance of continued avoidance of technology and cognitive exertion during this stage. Provide any new information or update to the school if necessary.	
	3	An increase in exposure to light and moderate noise levels may continue. A return to a "regular" setting in moderation is desired in this stage to ensure that moderate amounts of noise and light are tolerable before returning to school.	A re-introduction to mild cognitive exertion through controlled tasks that are not administered in a formal setting may take place in this stage. These can include pleasure reading, card games, puzzles, etc. Individuals may also enjoy increased mobility (e.g. walking) at this stage.	Limit exposure to mild, non-strenuous cognitive tasks to shorter durations (e.g. 15 minute sessions) with frequent breaks. Durations can increase with a reduction or improvement of concussion symptoms.	Encourage activities that will re-introduce your child to non-strenuous physical activity and mobility (e.g. walking) and social tasks (e.g. visiting with friends / family). These should be limited to things that do not require an effort to remain focused for prolonged periods of time.	
RETURN TO SCHOOL STAGES	4	A classroom environment may be altered or visual aides may be worn to simulate reduced levels of lighting. Exposure to large screens, bright lights and other visual distractions should be limited. Alternative location arrangements can be made if necessary.	Limitations and restrictions on levels of activity in the classroom should be followed. In many cases, a "sit and listen" approach is the best way to initiate a return to the classroom. In all cases, a student should not expect to participate in any difficult tasks that require cognitive exertion (e.g. tests, quizzes) at this point.	Avoid tasks that require a prolonged, narrow attentional focus such as lengthy periods of reading, writing, gaming, problem solving, etc. Students should also avoid lengthy exposure to technology and "screen-time" should remain limited to prevent re-aggravation of symptoms.	E	Reduced noise/light or alternate space arrangements if necessary.
					I	Alternatives to bright screens/visual distractions used during instruction.
					A	No method of assessment during this stage of recovery
	5	Depending on the type of classroom, environments may still need to be modified or arrangements for support may still need to be made. For example, music, drama, and physical education classes that typically involve higher levels of noise and distraction may still involve limited exposure.	A re-introduction to exposure to screen time and other visual distractions that require subsequent cognitive stress should take place in this stage. Students should be able tolerate moderate volume of exposure to these resources while making a mental effort.	A monitored, re-introduction to regular volumes of screen-time and other technology use can occur here but should remain limited if symptoms re-arise. Students should understand that a return of symptoms should be treated with a return to the recommended steps in stage 4.	E	Gradual re-introduction to noise/light along with other distractions.
					I	Gradual re-introduction to exposure to technology in instructional methods.
					A	Provide extensions and assistance for assignments and evaluation
6	A normal daily routine in any classroom should be tolerable at this point. Normal levels of noise, light, and other distractions should not bother a student who has achieved a full recovery.	No modifications to regular activity should be required. Students should still expect to experience some degree of frustration as a result of absence from school and missed exposure to material, but should acknowledge that this is unrelated to concussion symptoms. Students may be introduced to individual sport-specific, non-contact exercises for 20-30 minutes.	No restrictions regarding cognitive stress, technology use, or visual distractions are necessary. Students may need to be supported for tests and assignments that require experience or knowledge of material that was missed due to absence during earlier stages of recovery. No resistance or weight training.	Help your child build and maintain the confidence they will require to return to a regular academic load. Continue to monitor their return by asking them about their experiences with respect to returning to a regular learning environment.		
				No modifications to environment, instruction, or assessment are necessary in this stage. However, teachers should remain mindful of missed materials during earlier stages of recovery and whether or not sufficient time and resources have been provided for a student to learn what he/she has missed.		