



FORT WILLIAM
CURLING
CLUB SINCE 1891

Concussion Return to Sport

Authorization

Authorized By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "D. Campbell", is written over a horizontal line.

President

Effective Date:

September 23, 2019

STEP 1: NO ACTIVITY, ONLY COMPLETE REST.

Limit school, work and tasks requiring concentration. Refrain from physical activity until symptoms are gone. Once symptoms are gone, a physician, preferably one with experience managing concussions, should be consulted before beginning a step-wise return to play process.

STEP 2: LIGHT AEROBIC EXERCISE.

Activities such as walking or stationary cycling. The player should be supervised by someone who can help monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting. The duration and intensity of the aerobic exercise can be gradually increased over time if no symptoms or signs return during the exercise or the next day.

SYMPTOMS RE-OCCUR? - Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? - Proceed to Step 3 the next day.

STEP 3: TRAINING DRILLS.

Activities such as skating or throwing can begin at step 3. There should be no body contact or other jarring motions such as high-speed stops or hitting a baseball with a bat.

SYMPTOMS RE-OCCUR? - Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? - Proceed to Step 4 the next day.

STEP 4: BEGIN PRACTICE.

SYMPTOMS RE-OCCUR?? - Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? - The time needed to progress from non-contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and with the player. Proceed to Step 5 only after medical clearance.

STEP 5: GAME PLAY.

SYMPTOMS? - Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist consult a physician.

What is the Role of the Coach / Instructor / Club Management in Return-to-Play?

Coaches / Instructors / Club Management have the FINAL SAY about whether the injured player plays. IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT... it is essential to err on the side of caution. Exertion makes concussion symptoms worse. In addition, for youth, they aren't as well coordinated as usual and their decision-making is poorer, the risk of another injury is greater.

One of the greatest risks associated with returning to play too soon is getting injured again and suffering Second Impact Syndrome. While rare, Second Impact Syndrome is a condition in which a second concussion occurs before the brain has completely healed from the first concussion; the syndrome causes rapid and severe brain swelling. Second Impact Syndrome can result from even a mild concussion that occurs days or weeks after the initial concussion. Most cases of Second Impact Syndrome occur in young athletes.

The coach's role in return to play has a strong educational component. Concussion education at the start of the season is really important. Key messages involve what a concussion is, why it's important to tell coaches or other adults about a suspected concussion, and what can happen if you aren't honest about a suspected concussion. Children need to know that rushing back before their brain has had a chance to rest will actually result in them missing MORE playing time.

Coaches also have a responsibility to stay up-to-date on the treatment of head injuries. Coaches should also check regularly with leading authorities such as Parachute (www.parachutecanada.org), the Coaching Council of Canada (coach.ca) and the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (www.cces.ca).

Club programs should have a clear Return to Play Policy – inclusive of Medical Clearance Documentation for an athlete Returning to Play following a concussion.

How can you cope with the symptoms of a concussion?

The best medical management for a concussion is rest, both physical and mental. A child who has suffered a concussion may often feel lethargic and tired. It is important for children to admit this fatigue to themselves. The brain is telling the child that he or she needs rest, and it is extremely important for the child to listen. If the child continues pushing himself or herself and struggling on, it is likely to make the symptoms worse.

The first thing to fail when children get tired is concentration. If there is something important to get done, it is best for children to complete it when they are fresh after resting. When their attention starts to fade, they may need to stop, rest again, and write down the important things for later.

Many children who have suffered a concussion often complain of being very irritable. Children may find that things that would not normally annoy them suddenly do. Children sometimes find themselves losing their temper, snapping at family members or friends, and being very annoyed over things. This may be because children's own self-control needs a fresh, working brain as well. In order to cope with this, children need to be aware of emotions. Some children have learned personal relaxation methods such as imagery and progressive relaxation methods to optimize their coping skills.

Other symptoms such as dizziness and clumsiness appear because the brain is reacting slowly and less efficiently. Concussions can upset balance organs in the ear, resulting in vertigo. One way to deal with these types of symptoms is to take special care in actions and movements, which means walking slowly and being aware of one's surroundings.

Other problems such as noise sensitivity and visual changes are also the result of a concussion. Putting up with noise and bright lights needs brain energy, and children may find that they do not have the energy level to do so. Children may be around a loud radio, bright lights, or a stimulating environment and find themselves suffering from bad headaches. One way of coping with this is to avoid loud noise and bright lights as much as possible. Many people find it helpful to wear sunglasses everywhere, even indoors.

When dealing with other symptoms, it is crucial for children to take only medications that their doctor has prescribed or approved of. Also, children should not take any drugs not prescribed by a medical doctor, as it may hinder recovery and can put them at risk of further injury. Although symptoms resolve spontaneously in most cases, usually in a couple of weeks, the process of healing from a concussion may take considerably more time. It is important for children to pace themselves and increase activity gradually.

Version #	Date	Summary of Major Changes Made / By
01	23-Sep-19	Initial Draft. Larry Rathje/Tricia Sampson (formatting only)