

After a concussion

Helping your child return to school and play

Most children with a concussion get better quickly and fully. Still, it is important to protect your child's brain with rest and a slow return to school and play.

Because each child and each injury is different, when your child can return to school and play varies.* While recovering, your child may feel signs of the injury either right away or **hours** or **days** after the injury; sometimes the child may not feel the symptom until they return to their activities.

We recommend the "return to learn" and "return to play" steps below. Some children may take days or weeks to complete each step. Some may complete a step a day. Your child's provider can help guide the recovery.

Return to learn

Step 1: Rest the mind

- Right after the injury, your child should rest their mind (brain and body) as much as possible.
- Rest may mean no school, no homework and only 15 minutes per hour of TV and computer/video time. Video and TV can make the child's symptoms worse.

Step 2: Light mental effort

- As your child feels better, slowly try light mental activities such as watching TV, listening to audio books, drawing and cooking. Stop these activities if the child starts to feel worse.
- At first, your child may only be able to do five to 15 minutes of mental effort at a time. If the symptoms don't get worse, they can add to the length of the effort.

Step 3: Schoolwork at home

- When they can do light mental activity, your child should try to do some schoolwork at home. Start short, up to 30 minutes per hour, and build from there.

Step 4: Return to school

- When your child is able to do one or two hours of schoolwork at home for one or two days, they may try a half day of school. Or, if your child is able to do three to four hours of homework, they may try a full day of school.
- If your child starts feeling worse at school, they should take a break in a quiet area with someone watching. When symptoms go away, they may return to class. If the symptoms don't go away, the child should go home.

Call 911 if your child has any of these signs:

- Seizures (twitching or jerking movement of parts of the body; may look stiff)
- Weakness or tingling in the arms or legs
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Confused, restless or agitated
- Impaired consciousness
- Hard to stir or unable to awaken
- Repeated throwing up
- Slurred speech
- Bloody or clear fluid from the nose or ears

(continued)



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Return to play

Step 1: Rest the body

- Your child should rest their body until they feel better and the signs of the injury improve.
- The child doesn't need to stay in bed, but limit them to light walking for up to 20 minutes. Do not let them break a sweat or do any activity that causes the symptoms to return.

Step 2: Light exercise

- When they are not having symptoms, your child may do exercise such as fast walking and stationary cycling, as long as the symptoms don't return. No weightlifting.
- Your child shouldn't go to the next step unless they go through a full day of school without feeling any symptoms.

Step 3: Mild exercise, sport-specific exercise

- Once your child can do light exercise and go to school, they can start doing mild exercise and exercises that are part of their sport. Examples are jogging or short periods of running, mild stationary biking, throwing a baseball and kicking a soccer ball. Don't do any activity where their head could get hit.

Step 4: Harder exercise, no contact

- Next, your child can start harder exercises: sprinting/running, hard stationary biking, weightlifting and drills. These should all be activities with no contact.

Step 5: Return to play

- At this point, ask your child's doctor if your child is ready for play or sports with contact.

**If your child is still feeling effects of the concussion for more than a few weeks, talk with your doctor about seeing a specialist who can assess and treat people who have problems with balance, dizziness, thinking and remembering after a concussion.*

For more information, call the Legacy Concussion Program at **503-672-6005**.

www.legacyhealth.org/concussion

Symptoms of a concussion

Mental	Physical	Emotional	Sleep
Difficulty thinking clearly	Headache Fuzzy or blurry vision	Irritability	Sleeping more than usual
Feeling slowed down	Nausea or vomiting (early on), dizziness	Sad	Sleeping less than usual
Difficulty concentrating	Sensitive to noise or light	More emotional	Trouble falling asleep
Difficulty remembering new information	Tired, having no energy	Nervousness or anxiety	

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