

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS
COLUMBIA GRAMMAR AND PREPARATORY SCHOOL
CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL FOR RETURN TO PLAY

Return to play following a concussion involves a stepwise progression once the individual is symptom free. There are many risks to premature return to play including: a greater risk for a second concussion because of a lower concussion threshold, second impact syndrome (abnormal brain blood flow that can result in death), exacerbation of any current symptoms, and possibly increased risk for additional injury due to alteration in balance. These New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) current returns to play recommendations are based on the most recent international expert opinion.

- No student athlete should return to play while symptomatic.
- Students are prohibited from returning to play the day the concussion is sustained.
- If there is any doubt as to whether a student has sustained a concussion, it should be treated as a concussion.
- Once the student athlete is symptom free at rest for 24 hours and has a signed release by the treating clinician, she/he may begin the return to play progression below (provided there are no other mitigating circumstances).

Phase 1: low impact, non-strenuous, light aerobic activity such as walking or riding a stationary bike. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a 24-hour period proceed to;

Phase 2: higher impact, higher exertion, and moderate aerobic activity such as running or jumping rope. No resistance training. If tolerated, without return to symptoms over a 24-hour period proceed to;

Phase 3: sport-specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated, without return to symptoms over a 24-hour period proceed to;

Phase 4: sport-specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated, without return to symptoms over a 24-hour period proceed to;

Phase 5: full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity. If tolerated, without return to symptoms over a 24 hour period proceed to;

Phase 6: Return to full activities with no restrictions.

Each step should take 24 hours so that an athlete would take approximately one week to proceed through the full rehabilitation protocol once they are asymptomatic at rest and with provocative exercise. If any post concussion symptoms occur while in the stepwise program, then the student should drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and try to progress again after a further 24-hour period of rest has passed.

The Concussion Management and Awareness Act requires the immediate removal from athletic activities of any pupil believed to have sustained or who has sustained a mild traumatic brain injury (concussion). In the event that there is any doubt as to whether a student has sustained a concussion, it shall be presumed that he or she has been so injured until proven otherwise. No such student shall resume athletic activity until he or she shall have been symptom free for not less than twenty-four hours, and has been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. The physician authorization will then be forwarded to the School Nurse or Certified Athletic Trainer for clearance.