

Graduated return to play following concussion – Child

Your child has sustained a concussion (a form of head injury which causes disturbance in brain function including the way a person thinks, feels and remembers things). S/he has been assessed and it is safe for them to go home with you.

Following a concussion, it is important not to return to sports too quickly. Return, before the brain has fully recovered, can lead to further injuries and long-term health issues. This is because children and adolescents are more susceptible to concussion and so can take longer to recover.

Why Graduated Return to Play (GRTP)?

Concussion must be taken seriously to protect the short and long-term health of your child. The purpose of GRTP is to allow adequate time for the brain to recover following a head injury. One important part of this is to have a realistic expectation of recovery time as well as knowing how your child might be feeling.

Symptoms of concussion

Symptoms of concussion typically become evident in the first 48 hours after a head injury and include:

- ♦ Headaches
- ♦ Feelings of dizziness
- ♦ Nausea/vomiting
- ♦ Memory problems
- ♦ Sleep disturbance
- ♦ Impulsiveness and self-control problems
- ♦ Sensitivity to light or noise
- ♦ Restlessness
- ♦ Fatigue
- ♦ Difficulties with concentration
- ♦ Visual problems
- ♦ Irritability
- ♦ Feeling depressed, tearful or anxious
- ♦ Difficulties thinking and problem-solving

What are the risks/side effects/ potential complications of not completing GRTP?

- Prolonged concussion symptoms
- Increased risk of developing concussion symptoms
- Risk of further head injury
- Increased risk of other injuries

Resting

In teenagers / children a minimum of 24-48 hours of complete physical and cognitive (thinking activities) rest is advised as the brain needs time to rest and recover following a concussion.

Physical activity your child should rest from:	Brain activities your child should rest from:
Running Cycling Swimming Lifting weights	Reading that is heavy/intense Watching television, computer and /or video games Using a smart phone

After this they should have a time of relative rest. This means they can start to do more activities, if it doesn't start new or worsen any symptoms.

When can my child return to school/college?

- It is OK for your child to miss a day or two of school/college following a concussion if they are feeling unwell or if when they go back their symptoms return or worsen. Extended absence is rarely needed.
- It is important to have good communication with the school. Your child may need to have a phased return to school/college if there are worsening symptoms.
- If your child is due to be undertaking tests or exams, you should think about whether they should be delayed where possible until fully recovered. In some cases, symptoms may be prolonged, and this may impact your child's studies. If this is the case, early assessment by the GP and educational support is advised.
- Your child should have returned to school or full studies before restarting physical activities.

**If you are at all concerned, please contact the relevant
Emergency Department at the
Grange University Hospital 01633 493287**

When can my child return to sport?

They should have a GRTP programme before returning to active sports. The GRTP programme means that a player is introduced back to sport in a stepwise fashion. It is recommended that a medical practitioner or approved healthcare professional confirm that your child can take part in full contact training, so we will advise you to follow up with your GP/School.

The link under reference gives an idea of what a GRTP programme is about.

If you have any concerns about your child's health, we advise you to follow up with your GP's practice or attend the Emergency Department at the Grange University Hospital. You could also call the number provided below to discuss any concerns.

References:

UK-Concussion-Guidelines.pdf

Concussion Guidance | World Rugby

Scottish sports concussion guidance (sportscotland.org.uk)

The FA's Concussion guideline for football | England Football

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**This document is available in Welsh/
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**