

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Return to Learn Protocol

## After concussion/mild TBI

*Progression is individual and all concussions are different*

Students should progress as symptoms dictate, remaining at any step as long as needed. If symptoms worsen, return to the previous step.

A student may enter return to learn at any phase. As exercise is integral it should not be delayed. **Light exercise should be started in small amounts as soon as possible.**

STEP	PROGRESSION	DESCRIPTION
1.	<u>HOME</u> Light physical and mental Activity as tolerated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None to minimal mental exertion. Reduce computer, texting, video games or homework staying below symptom level</li> <li>● Stay at home except for walks as tolerated</li> <li>● No driving, no sport practices, or games</li> </ul>
2.	<u>HOME</u> Light physical and mental activity as tolerated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Up to 30 minutes mental exertion</li> <li>● No prolonged concentration</li> <li>● Stay at home except for walks as tolerated</li> <li>● No driving, no sport practices, or games</li> </ul>
<p><b>Progress to the next level</b></p> <p>When able to tolerate up to 30 minutes mental exertion without worsening of symptoms            *NOTE: signs and symptoms of concussion often last up to 2 weeks but may last longer</p>		
3.	<u>SCHOOL</u> Part time (Maximum Accommodations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Shortened days/schedule</li> <li>● Built-in Breaks - provide quiet place for scheduled mental rest</li> <li>● No significant classroom or standardized testing</li> <li>● Modify rather than postpone academics</li> <li>● Provide extra time, extra help, and modified assignments.</li> <li>● No driving, no sport practices, or games</li> </ul>

**Progress to the next level**

When able to tolerate 30-40 minutes mental exertion without worsening of symptoms.

\*NOTE: Physical activity is part of healing; activity should be encouraged as long as it does not exacerbate symptoms.

May be considered for Return to Play or Return to Physical Activity Protocol\*

\*When returns to school full time

\*With appropriate healthcare professional approval and supervision

4.	<b>SCHOOL</b> Part Time-Full Time (Moderate Accommodations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No standardized testing</li> <li>● Modified Classroom testing</li> <li>● Begin decrease of extra time, help, and modification of assignments</li> <li>● PE class as tolerated. No participation in games.</li> </ul>
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STEP	PROGRESSION	DESCRIPTION
<b>Progress to the next level</b> When able to tolerate 60 minutes mental exertion without worsening of symptoms		
5.	<b>SCHOOL</b> Full Time (Minimal Accommodations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No standardized testing. Routine tests OK</li> <li>● Continue to decrease extra time, help, and modification of assignments</li> <li>● May require more supports in academically challenging subjects</li> <li>● PE class as tolerated. No participation in games</li> </ul>
6.	<b>SCHOOL</b> Full Time (No Accommodations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attends all classes</li> <li>● Full course work/homework</li> <li>● May take standardized testing</li> </ul>

***\*\*If persistent symptoms are interfering with academic performance, the students educational support needs should be reassessed.***

- **Students on the RTL protocol are to check in with the school nurse prior to the first class of each day.**
- Steps are not days. Each step must take a minimum of 24 hours and the length of time needed to complete each step will vary based on the severity of the concussion and the student.
- Signs and symptoms of concussion often last 7-10 days but may last longer in children and adolescents.
- If symptoms reappear, the student needs to be re-examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

- After sustaining a concussion, it is important to avoid any activity that places a student at risk of sustaining another concussion.
- A gradual return to activities will include increasing and/or decreasing participation in an activity based on how the recovery is progressing.
- As a student, what is the best way you can help yourself? You know that you feel different and that something has changed, but you may have trouble describing those changes. Speak up and tell your parents/guardians, teachers, and nurse that you need their support. If you become frustrated or tired and need a break, then let them and the nurse know. If you feel you can do more, then share that as well. Make sure you have a strong voice and speak up for yourself.
- **Student athletes** will also need to complete a **Return to Play Protocol** with the school trainer. The **school nurse** will help make the transition from Return to Learn to Return to Play protocols with the student.

**Concussion Resources:** [Brain Injury Association of VT](#)  
[CDC Heads Up Concussion Information](#)

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