



RECOVERING FROM A CONCUSSION

School

- An initial period of about 24-48 hours of brain rest can be helpful for concussion recovery
- It is important that children gradually return to school as their symptoms allow after a brief period of rest, even if they cannot make it through full days of school
- Many children will need school accommodations to allow shortened school days, rest breaks throughout the day, lightened homework load, ear plugs for noise sensitivity, or hats for light sensitivity
- School accommodations will need to be adjusted frequently as your child recovers to allow them to Return to Learn successfully
- Children must fully return to school, symptom-free, before they are able to return to sports

Exercise

- After 24-48 hours of rest, low-level, symptom-limited aerobic exercise can help children recover from a concussion
- Can be done at school, home, or both, as long as it is supervised
- Low levels of physical activity include walking, light jogging, light stationary biking, supervised swimming
- If physical activity causes a headache or other concussion symptoms, stop and rest
- No contact sports or high risk activities such as trampolines, playgrounds or wheeled activities
- Your doctor will need to clear you to complete the Return to Play steps in order to gradually return to sports once symptoms have resolved

Sleep

- In the first 24-48 hours after concussion, children can sleep as much as they need to recover
- After the first day or two, return to a normal sleep schedule with a consistent bedtime and wake time
- Avoid naps during the day
- Avoid screens 1 hour before bedtime (TV, phone, tablet, video games)

Screen Time

- Newer research shows that avoiding screens completely may be socially isolating and may increase recovery time for children
- If screen time is making headache or concussion symptoms worse, this should be limited
- Video games are particularly aggravating for concussions due to the concentration required, fast moving images and loud sounds, and thus should be avoided



Driving

- No specific guidelines exist on when children can return to driving
- Driving is a complex process that involves coordination of multiple skills and concentration that adolescents recovering from a concussion may not be capable of

Diet

- Drink plenty of water throughout the day, hydration is very helpful in concussion recovery and management of headaches
- Avoid caffeine and sugary drinks
- Eat a well-balanced diet including healthy snacks
- Avoid skipping meals, especially breakfast

Supplements

- No human data exists that supplements are beneficial for recovery from concussion
- There is likely more potential for harm given that supplements are not regulated by the FDA

Medication

- Discuss medication use with your doctor
- Tylenol and Advil can be helpful to treat symptoms initially, but are not meant to be used long-term for concussion symptoms



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