



CONCUSSION RETURN TO LEARN (RTL) PROTOCOL



Instructions:

- Keep brain activity below the level that causes worsening of symptoms (e.g., headache, tiredness, irritability).
- If symptoms worsen at any stage, stop activity and rest.
- Seek further medical attention if your child continues with symptoms beyond 7 days.
- If appropriate time is allowed to ensure adequate brain recovery before progressing mental activity, your child may have a better outcome (do not try to rush through these stages).
- Please give this form to teachers/school administrators to help them understand your child's recovery.

Stage	Home Activity	School Activity	Physical Activity
Brain Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest quietly, nap and sleep as much as needed • Avoid bright light if bothersome • Drink plenty of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours • Avoid "screen time" (text, computer, cell phone, TV, video games) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No school • No homework or take-home tests • Avoid reading and studying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking short distances to get around is okay • No strenuous exercise • No driving
	<i>Progress to the next stage when your child starts to improve, but may still have some symptoms</i>		
Restful Home Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a regular bedtime/wake up schedule • Allow at least 8-10 hours of sleep and short naps if needed (less than 1 hour) • Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours • Limit "screen time" to less than 30 minutes total a day; use large font 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No school • May begin easy tasks at home (drawing, baking, cooking) • Soft music and 'books on tape' okay • Once your child can complete 60-90 minutes of light mental activity without a worsening of symptoms they may go to the next step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress physical activity, like untimed walking • No strenuous physical activity or contact sports • No driving
	<i>Progress to the next stage when your child starts to improve and has fewer symptoms</i>		
Return to School - PARTIAL DAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow 8-10 hours of sleep per night • Limit napping to allow for full sleep at night • Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours • "Screen time" less than 1 hour a day • Limit social time outside of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradually return to school • Start with a few hours/half-day • Take breaks in the nurse's office or a quiet room every 2 hours or as needed • Avoid loud areas (music, band, choir, shop class, locker room, cafeteria, loud hallway and gym) • Use brimmed hat/earplugs as needed. Sit in front of class • Use preprinted large font (18) class notes • Complete necessary assignments only • No tests or quizzes. Limit homework time • Multiple choice or verbal assignments better than long writing assignments • Tutoring or help as needed • Stop work if symptoms increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress physical activity and as instructed by physician • No strenuous physical activity or contact sports • No driving
	<i>Progress to the next stage when your child can complete the above activities without symptoms</i>		
Return to School - FULL DAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow 8-10 hours of sleep per night • Avoid napping • Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours • "Screen time" and social activities outside of school as symptoms tolerate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress to attending core classes for full days of school • Add in electives when tolerated • No more than 1 test or quiz per day • Give extra time or untimed homework/tests • Tutoring or help as needed • Stop work if symptoms increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress physical activity and as instructed by physician • No strenuous physical activity or contact sports • Okay to drive
	<i>Progress to the next stage when your child has returned to full school and is able to complete all assignments/tests without symptoms</i>		
Full Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to normal home and social activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to normal school schedule and course load 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start CIF Return to Play Protocol

** Guidelines adapted from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Return to Learn Protocol