

Manchester Royal Infirmary

Information for Patients

Concussion and Sport Patient Advice Leaflet

You have been diagnosed with a mild head injury. This leaflet gives you information and advice on what to do if you are thinking of going back to sport after a mild head injury. Please follow the instructions and advice in this leaflet which will help you to return safely to sporting activity. This patient advice leaflet **must only** be used with the *mild head injury patient advice leaflet* which explains what a concussion is and what symptoms you may experience from a concussion.

When can I return to sport?

If you play sport, then do not return to sport until all symptoms of concussion have gone. This is because your reaction times and thinking will often be slower, putting you at risk of further injury. Please see your GP about your symptoms if:

- You play contact sport (e.g., football or rugby)
- Your symptoms persist for more than two weeks
- This is your second concussion within 12 months
- You have a history of multiple previous concussions
- You have any concerns about your symptoms

How do I safely return to sport?

Take complete rest in the first two days following a concussion. Your brain needs time to get better.

As symptoms improve, you can gradually increase the amount of activity that you do at home. Once you can carry out everyday activities then you are safe to start returning to your sport. Below is a six-step training programme of increasing physical activity to safely return to playing sport after a concussion.

Each step will take at least one day to complete. If you develop any concussion symptoms during the programme, then reduce activity by going back to the previous step of the programme as you may be pushing yourself too hard. Try to move on to the next step again the following day.

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| Step 1 | Rest until concussion symptoms have gone. Minimum of two weeks for this stage. Once you are symptom free you may move onto step 2 |
| Step 2 | Light exercise, for example, jogging or riding an exercise bike (NO resistance training) |
| Step 3 | Sport specific training, for example, running. |

- Step 4 Non-contact training, for example, more complex drills such as passing or kicking a ball.
(After this step if you play contact sport, we recommend you speak to your GP before moving onto Step 5 to ensure it is safe to do so)
- Step 5 Full contact training.
- Step 6 Return to game play. (You should reach this step after a minimum of 18 days).

The guidance in this patient advice leaflet is general. Many sports have their own guidelines and rules on returning to sport. Your sport will likely have one on their website. If you play for a club, then contact them for further information.

Additional support

You can find further support and information from sporting organisations.

Rugby Union

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/headcase>

Rugby League

<https://www.rugby-league.com/governance/medical/concussion>

Football Association

<https://www.thefa.com/get-involved/fa-concussion-guidelines-if-in-doubt-sit-them-outold>

Contact information



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