



### **Post-Concussion Home/ School Instructions\***

You have been diagnosed with a concussion (also known as a mild traumatic brain injury). The following instructions are provided to assist your recovery. Following these instructions can also prevent further injury.

#### Returning to Daily Activities

Following a concussion, **rest is the key**. The injured person:

- Should not participate in any high risk activities (e.g., sports, physical education (PE), riding a bike, etc) or other physical activities that increase his/her normal heart rate.
- Limit activities that require a lot of lengthy mental activity or concentration (such as homework, schoolwork, job-related activities, extended video game playing), as this can make the symptoms worse.
- Get good sleep; no late nights or sleepovers. Take naps if tired or drowsy.
- The child/ adolescent patient will need help from parents, teachers, coaches, and athletic trainers to help manage their activity level. It is hard to change from the normal routine.
- During recovery, it is normal to feel frustrated and sad when you do not feel right and you can't be as active as usual.

<u>It is OK to:</u>	<u>There is NO need to:</u>	<u>Do NOT:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for headaches</li> <li>• Use ice pack on head &amp; neck as needed for comfort</li> <li>• Eat a light diet</li> <li>• Go to sleep</li> <li>• Rest (no strenuous activity or sports)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check eyes with a flashlight</li> <li>• Wake up every hour</li> <li>• Test reflexes</li> <li>• Stay in bed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink alcohol</li> <li>• Drive while symptomatic</li> <li>• Exercise or lift weights</li> <li>• Take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), aspirin, naproxen or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications until told by a physician</li> </ul>

#### Returning to School

- Inform the teacher(s), school nurse, school psychologist or counselor, and administrator(s) about your child/ adolescent's injury and symptoms. Share a copy of these instructions with them.
- Students who experience symptoms of concussion often need extra help to perform school-related activities and may not perform at their best on classroom or standardized tests. Rest breaks during the school day can also be helpful. As symptoms decrease during recovery, the extra help or supports can be removed slowly.

#### **School personnel should watch for:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased problems paying attention or concentration</li> <li>• increased problems remembering or learning new information</li> <li>• longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• greater irritability, less able to cope with stress</li> <li>• increase in symptoms (e.g., headache, tiredness) when doing schoolwork</li> </ul> |
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#### Returning to Sports & Recreation

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your son/daughter should <b>NEVER</b> return to sports participation or active recreation with <b>ANY</b> symptoms unless directed by a qualified health professional</li> <li>• No return to Physical Education class</li> <li>• No physical activity at recess</li> <li>• No return to sports practices or games</li> <li>• Be sure that the Physical Education teacher and all coaches are aware of the injury and symptoms.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When appropriate, have the student check in with the athletic trainer on the first day he/she returns.</li> <li>• It is normal for the child/ adolescent to feel frustrated, sad and even angry because they cannot return to sports and/ or recreation right away. With any injury, a full recovery will lower the chances of getting hurt again. It is better to miss one or two games than the whole season.</li> </ul> |
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**Serious Signs to Watch For.** Please watch carefully for any of the following serious signs and symptoms. The best guideline is to note symptoms that worsen, and behaviors that are a change in your son/daughter. If you observe any of the following signs, call your doctor or go to your emergency department immediately.

<b>Headaches that worsen</b>	<b>Look very drowsy, can't be awakened</b>	<b>Can't recognize people or places</b>	<b>Unusual behavior change</b>
<b>Seizures</b>	<b>Repeated vomiting</b>	<b>Increasing confusion</b>	<b>Significant irritability</b>
<b>Neck pain</b>	<b>Slurred speech</b>	<b>Weakness/ numbness in arms/legs</b>	<b>Change in state of consciousness</b>

[\*Adapted from ACE Care Plan "Heads Up: Brain Injury in Your Practice" (2007); National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Management of Sport-Related Concussion (2004)]