

Unit 7 Return to Play Protocol
For Athletes that have Sustained a Concussion

Return to Play Team

Athletic Director

HS Counselor, Students A - L

HS Counselor, Students M - Z

JH Counselor

School Nurse

Athletic Trainer

* An athlete showing signs of a concussion should rest his/her brain for a few days prior to beginning the Return to Play process. This means eliminating TV, cell phone and computer use.

Return to Play Protocol

- I. Athlete sustains a concussion
 - A. During a practice, athletic event, at school or outside of school a concussion is sustained.
 - B. Student is diagnosed with a concussion at a medical facility by a doctor or at an athletic event by an Athletic Trainer
 - C. The school is informed of the concussion
 - a. By either a medical note from student's physician or Athletic Trainer present when concussion sustained

- II. Athlete returns to school
 - A. Prior to athlete's return, it is recommended that they meet with a physician or Unity's Athletic Trainer to begin the *Return to Play* process (documentation required)
 - B. Athletes should report directly to the Athletic Director who will then contact the *Return to Play* team

- III. Return to Play Protocol
 - A. Baseline: No Symptoms
To begin the *Return to Play* process, the athlete must be symptom free without the use of pain medication (such as, ibuprofen or tylenol) for a minimum of 24 hours

Step 1: Light Aerobic Activity

The Goal: Only to increase an athlete's heart rate

The Time: 5-10 minutes

The Activities: Exercise bike, walking, or light jogging

Absolutely NO weightlifting, jumping or hard running

Step 2: Moderate Activity

The Goal: Limited body and head movement

The Time: Reduced from typical routine

The Activities: Moderate jogging, brief running, moderate - intensity stationary bike, and moderate - intensity weightlifting

Step 3: Heavy Non-Contact Activity

The Goal: More intense but non-contact

The Time: Close to typical routine

The Activities: Running, high-intensity stationary biking, the player's regular weightlifting routine, and non-contact sport specific drills

Step 4: Practice and Full Contact

The Goal: Reintegrate in full contact practice

Step 5: Competition

The Goal: Return to competition

If at any time during the *Return to Play* process, the athlete experiences concussion symptoms (i.e. headache, dizziness, nausea or vomiting) the athlete will return to Step 1 of the *Return to Play* process.

An athlete with a concussion should return to their doctor if they experience any of the following symptoms:

***Vomiting**

***Can not stop crying**

***Worsening headache**

***Difficulty walking**

***Confusion**

***Drowsiness, or difficulty waking up**

***Abnormal movements or behaviors**

***Seizures**