



Information for patients, relatives and carers

Sports Concussion:

Return to play guidelines

This leaflet is to be used in conjunction with head injury advice leaflet

You have suffered a head injury during a sport or another activity, causing concussion. You have been given a leaflet that gives you advice about management of your symptoms immediately after your injury; this leaflet gives you advice about how to gradually return to sporting activity.

The return to play is a step-wise process, and you should only go onto the next step if you have no head injury symptoms. These include:

- headache
- dizziness
- memory or concentration problems
- tiredness
- irritability

The brain needs rest to heal, and persistent symptoms suggest it has not healed sufficiently to progress to the next step.

Each level should take 24 hours, and you should not return to full sporting activity in less than 14 days. If symptoms develop you should return to the previous level that caused no symptoms.

If you were unconscious or had significant memory loss you should not return to full contact activity for 21 days. This is mandatory for boxing and rugby.

Stage 1	Relative rest for 24–48 hours Minimise screen time Gentle exercise*
Stage 2	Gradually increase daily activities Activities away from school/work (introduce TV, increases reading, games etc.) * Exercise- light physical activity such as walking
Stage3	Increase tolerance for mental and exercise activities Increase study/work related activities with rest periods* Increase intensity of exercise*
Stage 4	Return to study/work and sport training Part-time return to education/work* Start training activities without risk of head impact
Stage 5	Return to normal work/education and full training Full work/education If symptom free at rest for 14 days, consider full contact training
Stage 6	Return to sports competition. (NOT before day 21) as long as symptom free at rest for 14 days and during the pre-competition training of Stage 5

*rest until the following day if this activity more than mildly increases symptoms

① If you have further concerns about your condition, please contact your GP. If you are not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online: <https://111.nhs.uk/> [When to use NHS 111 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/when-to-use-nhs-111/)

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email pals@york.nhs.uk

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print, Easy Read, or audio, please ask the staff who are looking after you.

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