



District 86-Hinsdale South High School

Post-Concussion Protocol for Return to Play After a Head Injury

After an athlete has been evaluated by an athletic trainer and it has been determined that the athlete has possibly sustained a concussion, the following protocol will be used to safely progress their return to play. Under no circumstances will this protocol be accelerated.

Athletes must be evaluated by a doctor, MD, DO, PA, or NP. A FAMILY member CANNOT clear their own child.

There should be approximately 24 hours (or longer) for each stage, and the athlete should return to previous stages if symptoms recur. Resistance training should only be added in later stages.

Rehabilitation Stage	Functional Exercise at Each Stage of Rehabilitation	Success Goal of Each Stage
1. No activity	Athlete must complete symptom checklist daily	Symptom free >24 hours
2. Biking	Stationary cycling keeping intensity <70% maximum predicted heart rate (30 min. max)	Increase heart rate without symptoms
3. Running	Running while keeping intensity <70% maximum predicted heart rate (30 min. max)	Add movement without symptoms
4. Agility Exercises	Sport-specific exercises. No head-impact activities.	Add coordination and cognition without symptoms
5. Non-contact practice	Full practice without contact	Increase exercise, coordination, and cognitive load without symptoms
	May start progressive resistance training	
6. Full contact practice	Following medical clearance participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff without symptoms
7. Return to play	Normal game play	

Protocol established from: "Consensus statement on concussion in sport – The 3rd International Conference on concussion in sport, held in Zurich, November 2008." *Journal of Clinical Neuroscience*. (2009) 16:755–763

Return to Participation: It is determined that an athlete is able to return to play when they are symptom free at rest and at exertion, and have returned to a baseline state of any of the tests they were administered. **An athlete will not return to participation the same day as a concussive event. When returning athletes to play, they will follow the stepwise symptom-limited program outlined above.** Once the athlete has received clearance from a physician licensed in all branches (MD, DO, PA, or NP), and/or the Athletic Trainer, they may return to play. **If an athlete receives clearance from a physician, the athletic trainer still reserves the right to hold the athlete out of participation.** A parent’s consent is not a sufficient means for an athlete to return to participation.

Athletes who have not been cleared to participate cannot be in uniform for any games.

This protocol is implemented to promote compliance with: IHSA Return to Play Policy, IHSA Protocol for Implementation of NFHS Sports Playing Rule for Concussions, Illinois HB 0200, and City of Chicago Ordinance – Concussion Injuries in Student Athletes in Chicago Schools (Ch. 7-22 Municipal Code of Chicago) which outline that athletes exhibiting symptoms of a concussion cannot return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

Athletic Training Staff Information

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