

Head Injury Return to Play Progression

Stage	Functional Exercise	Objective
No Activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest until symptom free	recovery
Light Aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity low; no resistance training; 20 minutes maximum	Increase heart rate
Sport-Specific conditioning	No impact activities, no pads or helmets. Running, cutting, skating, etc	Add movement
Non-contact Training Drills	Progress to more complex drills (passing, dribbling, serving, etc); may start resistance training. May wear helmet and pads	Exercise, coordination and increased cognitive load
Full Contact Practice	Following medical clearance, return to normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills
Return to Play	Normal sports participation	

Modified from *Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport*, Clin J Sport Med 2009

The athlete must remain symptom free for 24 hours in order to move up a level. If symptoms return either during or after exercise, the athlete should return to the previous level of activity after resting 24 hours.



St. Vincent
Sports Performance