

# Wisportsconcussion.org

## Treatment Recommendations

Allowing enough healing and recovery time following a concussion is crucial in preventing any further damage. Research shows that the effects of repeated concussion in young athletes can be cumulative. Most athletes who experience an initial concussion can recover completely as long as they are not returned to contact sports too soon. Following a concussion, there is a period of change in brain function that varies in severity and length with each individual. During this time, the brain is vulnerable to more severe or permanent injury. If the athlete sustains a second concussion during this time period, the risk of more serious brain injury increases.

The following treatment of a sports related concussion is recommended:

1. **Rest** - The most important thing you can do following your concussion is rest. Rest allows your brain to heal and return to normal function. It is very important that the athlete increases their amount of sleep time as this helps the healing process. They may hear the term “relative rest”. Relative rest means that you should restrict your physical and mental activity as much as possible. You should only do the minimum activity you need to do to complete your schoolwork, housework etc. This includes limiting your participation in sports and physical education as well as limiting your computer use, video game playing and other activities that can stimulate your brain.
2. **Education** - One important component of treating your concussion involves education. This booklet was designed to help you and your family understand what a concussion is, how to identify it and what to do to treat it. The intent is that by educating you on these things, you can begin to receive care immediately in the future if you sustain a concussion, therefore reducing your recovery time and risk for long term damage.
3. **Computerized Neuropsychological Testing** - Some medical professionals utilize the ImPACT Computerized Concussion Test to help provide an objective measurement of how your brain is functioning. This tool assists the physician in determining the severity of the injury and when it is safe for you to return to play. We recommend taking the ImPACT test within 48-72 hours of your injury.
4. **Student Advocacy** - Your physicians should work with your family and school faculty to ensure that your academic achievement does not suffer as a result of your injury. Guidelines regarding studying, test modification etc. should be discussed with you and your family with the appropriate recommendation made to your school.
5. **Physical Exertion Testing** - Once you are symptom free at rest, the physicians will generally allow you to resume gradual physical activity. If this activity is tolerated without a return of symptoms, it can be progressed by your school’s Licensed Athletic Trainer.
6. **Return to Play** - Once you are symptom free at rest, your neuropsychological test is back to normal (if applicable) and you are symptom free with exertion and sports specific activity, your physician may allow you to return to sports participation. If at anytime during your return to play you experience a return of your concussion symptoms, it is very important that you notify your coach, parent, Licensed Athletic Trainer or Physician.