

Returning to Sport After a Head Injury



OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS

You have sustained a minor head injury or concussion.

It is normal to experience a number of symptoms for up to two weeks after your head injury.

These include:

- ❖ mild headache,
- ❖ nausea without vomiting,
- ❖ memory problems,
- ❖ poor concentration,
- ❖ irritability,
- ❖ tiredness and sleep disruption.

A graduated return to sport is recommended as in the schedule below.

RETURNING TO SPORT

You should start at level one and only proceed to the next level of exercise provided that you have had no symptoms for 24 hours after exercise.

If symptoms occur, you should go back to level one and rest for 24 hours.

You should not return to any full sporting activity in less than one week.

If you had any loss of consciousness or significant memory loss after your head injury you should have no full contact activity (level 5) within three weeks unless advised by your doctor.

Contact your GP if your symptoms are not improving.



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RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

Level 1: Rest, no physical activity

Level 2: Low levels of activity

E.g. Walking, light jogging, light exercise biking, light weightlifting.
(lower weight, higher reps, no bench, no squat.)

Level 3: Sport specific training, or moderate levels of physical activity

E.g. Running in football, moderate jogging, brief running, moderate intensity exercise biking, moderate intensity weightlifting *(reduced time and/or reduced weight from your normal routine.)*

Level 4: Heavy non-contact physical activity/ training drills

E.g. sprinting/running, high intensity exercise biking, regular weightlifting, routine non-contact sport specific drills

Level 5: Full contact in controlled training/practice

Level 6: Full contact in games/return to competition

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www.nhsinform.co.uk

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