



HIGH DEFINITION PHYSICAL THERAPY
9785 S. Maroon Circle, STE 157, Englewood, CO 80112
phone: 303-792-0670 fax: 303-790-4576

RETURN TO SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Any approach needs to be collaborative between school professionals, parents, the child and healthcare professionals and should be tailored to each individual student.
- Most students with a concussion can return to school without difficulty, but often activities that require concentration and mental demands may aggravate symptoms or create new symptoms related to their concussion.
- Until cleared by a medical professional (MD, DO, NP, PA, or a Psychologist with training in concussion management) the student should never return to sports, PE class or other physical activity.
- Often it is important to establish a case manager (school nurse, school counselor, or other school professional) to co-ordinate with the care team and advocate for the student.
- The best way teachers and school professionals can help a student is to understand the signs and symptoms of a concussion and understand that when symptoms arise it is because the student's brain is overloaded and not because they are trying to avoid school related tasks.
- Cognitive symptoms may manifest in the classroom as slower reading speeds, difficulty with multi-step math problems, difficulty paying attention consistently, and increased distractibility. Additionally, increased irritability and anxiety with cognitive tasks is common after concussion.
- Physical symptoms such as headache, sensitivity to light, fatigue and increased sensitivity to noise are additional barriers to effective learning/return to school.
- The balance between rest and cognitive/physical stimulation is crucial for recovering from a concussion. Although rest is a component of initial concussion management, cognitive and physical stimulation at appropriate levels is crucial for full and speedy recovery. In general, cognitive activity should be at an appropriate intensity to challenge the student but does not worsen or result in the reemergence of concussion symptoms.
- Any return to school plan must have built in rest breaks for the student if they begin to have symptoms while performing any school related tasks.
- Students need to be educated that pushing through or toughing out symptoms of concussion can worsen and prolong symptoms and ultimately delay recovery.

WHAT TO MONITOR FOR AFTER CONCUSSION:

- Increased difficulty paying attention or concentrating
- Increased difficulty remembering or learning new information
- Longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments
- Increased difficulty with performing and organizing tasks



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- Increased difficulty shifting between tasks regardless of complexity of tasks
- Increased anxiety, irritability, fatigue, and emotions
- Decreased ability to cope with stress
- Increased inappropriate or impulsive behavior during class
- Difficulties handling a stimulating school environment (lights, noise, etc.)
- Physical symptoms (see list below)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

- Symptoms reported by students
 - Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or thinking clearly
 - Feelings of mental fogginess, haziness, sluggish or more slowed down
 - Headache or head pressure
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Balance problems and dizziness
 - Fatigue (regardless of how much they sleep) and constantly feeling tired
 - Blurry or double vision (especially while concentrating on moving objects)
 - Sensitivity to light or noise
 - Numbness or tingling
 - Complaints of just not feeling right
 - Increased feelings of irritability, sadness and nervousness
 - More emotional than usual
 - Individual may sleep more, or less than usual but is always drowsy and fatigued
 - Trouble falling asleep
- Signs observed by parent/guardian
 - Individual appears dazed or stunned throughout the day and is confused about events that happened during the day or in the past
 - Individual answers questions more slowly, has more difficulty finding responses and often repeats the question
 - Individual has difficulty recalling events prior to the hit/bump/fall and/or can't recall events after the hit/bump/fall
 - Individual loses consciousness (report to healthcare professional immediately)
 - Individual shows changes in behavior or personality
 - Individual forgets class schedule or assignments