

Caring for Your Child After a Concussion

After a mild brain injury (concussion), your child may need a brief period of physical and cognitive rest (brain rest) to help manage symptoms. Every concussion is different. For some children, symptoms resolve within a day. For others, symptoms last longer.



- In the first days after the injury, your child may need more sleep than usual. Help your child get plenty of restful sleep, and encourage them to nap if they are tired. Avoid late nights and sleepovers.
- Your child can return to daily functional activities (e.g., getting out of bed, dressing, grooming, eating with family) as soon as they are able to tolerate those activities.
- Your child can participate in light activities (e.g., watching television, reading, texting, video games, computer activities, going for walks) as long as those activities do not cause an increase in symptoms, such as headaches or dizziness. Start gradually (10 to 20 minutes of light activity). If your child is able to tolerate that level of activity, slowly increase the time spent in those activities as tolerated without an increase in symptoms.
- **Your child should not resume physical or recreational activities with risk of injury to the head (e.g., during recess, physical education, sports practice) until your healthcare provider gives clearance.**



Once your child is able to tolerate light activity for most of the day, your child should return to school. **If tolerance to light activity takes longer than a few days, you should contact your child's healthcare provider.**

Before your child returns to school, inform your child's teachers, school nurse, school psychologist or counselor, and administrators about your child's injury and symptoms. **Identify a point person in the school who can communicate with you closely during the transition period when your child is returning to school.**

- If needed, start with partial days. As your child feels better, work up to a full day of school.
- Other accommodations that may be needed upon return to school include:
 - Periodic, planned rest breaks to manage symptoms
 - Decreased workloads
 - Reduced test demands
 - Extra time
- As your child feels better, extra support at school can be slowly removed.

In addition to your child returning to school, you should discuss a plan for increasing your child's physical activity with your child's healthcare provider.

