

CIF Concussion Return to Learn (RTL) Protocol

Instructions:

- Keep brain activity below the level that causes worsening of symptoms (e.g., headache, tiredness, irritability).
- If symptoms worsen at any stage, stop activity and rest.
- Seek further medical attention if your child continues with symptoms beyond 7 days.
- If appropriate time is allowed to ensure complete brain recovery before returning to mental activity, your child may have a better outcome than if he or she tries to rush through these guidelines.
- Please give this form to teachers/school administrators to help them understand your child's recovery.

Stage	Home Activity	School Activity	Physical Activity
Brain Rest	Rest quietly, nap and sleep as much as needed. Avoid bright light if bothersome. Drink plenty of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours. Avoid "screen time" (text, computer, cell phone, TV, video games).	No school. No homework or take-home tests. Avoid reading and studying.	Walking short distances to get around is okay. No exercise of any kind. No driving.
<i>This step usually ends 3-5 days after injury. Progress to the next stage when your child starts to improve, but s/he may still have some symptoms.</i>			
Restful Home Activity	Set a regular bedtime/wake up schedule. Allow at least 8-10 hours of sleep and naps if needed. Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours. Limit "screen time" to less than 30 minutes a day.	No school. May begin easy tasks at home (drawing, baking, cooking). Soft music and 'books on tape' ok. Once your child can complete 60-90 minutes of light mental activity without a worsening of symptoms he/she may go to the next step.	Light physical activity, like walking. No strenuous physical activity or contact sports. No driving.
<i>Progress to the next stage when your child starts to improve and s/he has fewer symptoms.</i>			
Return to School - PARTIAL DAY	Allow 8-10 hours of sleep per night. Avoid napping. Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours. "Screen time" less than 1 hour a day. Spend limited social time with friends outside of school.	Gradually return to school. Start with a few hours/half-day. Take breaks in the nurse's office or a quiet room every 2 hours or as needed. Avoid loud areas (music, band, choir, shop class, locker room, cafeteria, loud hallway and gym). Use sunglasses/ earplugs as needed. Sit in front of class. Use preprinted large font (18) class notes. Complete necessary assignments only. No tests or quizzes. Limit homework time. Multiple choice or verbal assignments better than lots of long writing. Tutoring or help as needed. Stop work if symptoms increase.	Light physical activity, like walking. No strenuous physical activity or contact sports. No driving.
<i>Progress to the next stage when your child can complete the above activities without symptoms.</i>			
Return to School - FULL DAY	Allow 8-10 hours of sleep per night. Avoid napping. Drink lots of fluids and eat healthy foods every 3-4 hours. "Screen time" less than 1 hour a day. Spend limited social time with friends outside of school.	Progress to attending core classes for full days of school. Add in electives when tolerated. No more than 1 test or quiz per day. Give extra time or untimed homework/tests. Tutoring or help as needed. Stop work if symptoms increase.	Light physical activity, like walking. No strenuous physical activity or contact sports. No driving.
<i>Progress to the next stage when your child has returned to full school and is able to complete all assignments/tests without symptoms.</i>			
Full Recovery	Return to normal home and social activities.	Return to normal school schedule and course load.	May begin and must complete the CIF Return to Play (RTP) Protocol before returning to strenuous physical activity or contact sports.