



- Information for Teachers
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## INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Concussions are brain injuries and can be serious. In the first few days following a concussion, **complete** cognitive and physical rest are needed for the brain to heal. Complete rest means not taxing the brain with physical or cognitive demands. This isn't like the flu, where students can complete school-work while at home. They must rest.

***YOU PLAY A KEY ROLE IN ENSURING THE SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY OF A CONCUSSED STUDENT.***

Every concussion is different. Students heal at different rates. It will be necessary for you to monitor the student and report any worsening symptoms to the Concussion Management Team Communication Coordinator.

<b>SIGNS (OBSERVED BY TEACHERS):</b>	<b>SYMPTOMS (REPORTED BY STUDENT):</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Student appears dazed or stunned</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Seems confused</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forgets class schedule or assignments</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Moves clumsily (altered coordination)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits balance problems</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Answers questions slowly</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Repeats questions</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows changes in mood, behavior or personality (irritability, sadness, more emotionality, nervousness)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forgets events prior to hit or fall</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forgets events after the hit or fall</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Loses consciousness (even briefly)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Headache or pressure in head</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Foggy or hazy feeling</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Nausea or vomiting</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Double vision, blurry vision</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Feeling sluggish, fatigued or groggy</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Problems concentrating</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Problems remembering</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Just not feeling right or feeling down</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty thinking clearly</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Balance problems or dizziness</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Numbness or tingling</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sleep problems</li></ul>

The Concussion Management Team will provide you with a ***Gradual Return to Activity Plan***, which will indicate the temporary accommodations required for optimal healing.

***BE FLEXIBLE. MOST OF THE TIME, CONCUSSIONS HEAL IN 2–3 WEEKS.***

**The Return to Activity Plan is a medical decision with input from all members of the Concussion Management Team.**

## RETURN TO ACADEMICS PROGRESSION

Progression is individual. All concussions are different. Students may start at any of these steps, depending on symptoms, and remain at the step as long as needed. Return to previous step if symptoms worsen. Be flexible.

Steps	Progression	Description
1	<b>HOME—Total Rest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay at home</li> <li>No driving</li> <li>No mental exertion—computer, texting, video games, homework</li> </ul>
2	<b>HOME—Light Mental Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay at home</li> <li>No driving</li> <li>Up to 30 minutes mental exertion</li> <li>No prolonged concentration</li> </ul>

**Progress to Step 3 when student handles up to 30 minutes of sustained mental exertion without worsening of symptoms**

3	<b>SCHOOL—Part Time</b> Maximum accommodations Shortened day/schedule Built-in breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide quiet place for scheduled mental rest</li> <li>Lunch in quiet environment</li> <li>No significant classroom or standardized testing</li> <li>Modify rather than postpone academics</li> <li>Provide extra time, help and modified assignments</li> </ul>
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**Progress to Step 4 when student handles 30–40 minutes of sustained mental exertion without worsening of symptoms**

4	<b>SCHOOL—Part Time</b> Moderate accommodations Shortened day/schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No standardized testing</li> <li>Modified classroom testing</li> <li>Moderate decrease of extra time, help and modification of assignments</li> </ul>
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**Progress to Step 5 when student handles 60 minutes of mental exertion without worsening of symptoms**

5	<b>SCHOOL—Full Time</b> Minimal accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No standardized testing; routine tests are OK</li> <li>Continued decrease of extra time, help and modification of assignments</li> <li>May require more support in academically challenging subjects</li> </ul>
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**Progress to Step 6 when student handles all class periods in succession without worsening of symptoms AND receives medical clearance for full return to academics and athletics**

6	<b>SCHOOL—Full Time</b> Full academics No accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attends all classes</li> <li>Full homework and testing</li> </ul>
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**When symptoms continue beyond 3–4 weeks, prolonged in-school supports are required. Request a 504 meeting to plan and coordinate student supports.**

## ACCOMMODATIONS SUGGESTIONS

As a professional educator, there is much you can do to help your students recover from concussions and help their brains heal. Symptoms of concussion may impede information processing speed and the ability to handle a full load of work. You can provide accommodations for these **temporary learning disabilities**.

<p>The <b>mental effort</b> to prepare for and then take tests may worsen symptoms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Postpone or stagger tests. Avoid doubling up on tests. Provide shortened tests or extend time to take tests.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modify assignments and homework. Limit the number of problems, questions or pages to read. Emotional pressure can increase symptoms.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Concussed students will often exhibit temporary learning difficulties similar to those associated with ADHD (see below).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modify assignments—Select the most important concepts. Deliver instructions in smaller “chunks.”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Excuse from (or un-weight) specific tests and assignments. Remove or adjust large projects during the first critical three weeks.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow more time to complete tests.</li> </ul>
<p>Some students with symptoms of concussion exhibit the same characteristics as seen in ADHD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use a reader or recorded books for assignments and testing. A buddy might be used to read assignments aloud.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide written instructions for homework.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide pre-printed class notes or allow other students to share their notes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow the use of a tape recorder.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use a smaller, quieter exam room or use a quiet part of the classroom.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Move the student to a seat in front of the class. Seat away from windows, doors other distracters.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow for a temporary tutor to assist in organizing and planning work. Allow another student to help access school resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical exertion</b> may increase symptoms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Excuse from sports, PE, weight-lifting, cheer, band.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduce backpack weight by keeping textbooks in the classroom.</li> </ul>
<p>Students report that one of the scariest things they experience after concussion is <b>changes in mood</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow time to visit the school counselor, nurse or psychologist.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assign a buddy to help talk to the student, listen and calm the student when upset.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make arrangements to provide the student with a quiet supervised place to go to regain composure.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Let students know that this is one of the symptoms of concussion.</li> </ul>
<p>Some students are sensitive to light and/or noise after a concussion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Permit sunglasses or caps with visors indoors.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Permit ear protectors (not music).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a quiet alternative place to eat. Cafeterias are loud and bright.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow extra hall passing time or allow student to leave early to the next class to avoid hallway chaos.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Turn down lights in one area of the classroom.</li> </ul>

## ACCOMMODATIONS PLAN FROM HEALTHCARE PROVIDER (SAMPLE)

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Evaluation \_\_\_\_\_

The signs and symptoms of a concussion can persist for days or weeks and can greatly affect learning. Sometimes symptoms may persist for months or longer. Daily check-ins with the student are recommended. The accommodations may need to change before the student's next medical appointment. The Concussion Management Team can make minor adjustments to the accommodations as needed.

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### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- No school until specified, to be reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_
- Abbreviated daily class schedule (every other day, shortened day)
- No physical education classes (including weight training, aerobics, yoga)
- Consider reducing make-up work to critical work only
- No testing (e.g., midterms, finals, standardized) during recovery period, until student is cleared

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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COGNITIVE ISSUES

- Provide extended time to complete assignments and/or shortened assignments
- Provide extended time to take tests in a quiet environment
- Provide a quiet environment to take tests
- Provide written instructions for homework
- Provide class notes by teacher or peer
- Allow use of notes for test taking due to memory issues
- Consider using tape recorder for note taking

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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FATIGUE/PHYSICAL ISSUES

- Allow time to visit school nurse for treatment of headaches or other symptoms, if needed
- Allow rest breaks during the day, if needed
- Allow "hall passing time" before or after the crowds have cleared
- Allow student to wear sunglasses indoors to control for light sensitivity
- Allow student to take lunch in quiet space to allow for rest and control for noise sensitivity

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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMOTIONAL ISSUES

- Share progress and difficulties with parents, school nurse, counselor, medical provider and athletic trainer
- Develop an emotional support plan for the student, which may include an adult with whom the student can talk if feeling overwhelmed

Licensed Healthcare Provider \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_