

When is it safe to return to play?

If an athlete has any physical or cognitive signs or symptoms of a concussion the player is not safe to return to play. The athlete should not return to play until cleared by properly trained health professionals. Often an individualized multi-disciplined team approach including properly trained sports physicians, neuropsychologists, neurologists and certified athletic trainers is used in the diagnosis and treatment of concussion. Treatment should involve physical and mental rest. Once an athlete is asymptomatic with normal physical exams, has returns to baselines on neuropsychological testing if available, a progressive return to play program is implemented to increase the activity level in a step wise process. Because activity often worsens the symptoms of concussion, any time an individual starts to have symptoms reoccur it is important not to continue to advance the individual. An easy rule to live by, "when it doubt, sit them out!"

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