

HKYFA head injury Return to play policy

If a player is suspected of sustaining a concussion, head trauma or head injury, the athlete must see their pediatrician for a medical diagnosis and therefore be cleared for safe return to CONTACT play. This will require the parent to email or call the Head coach with the results of the visit with the physician. If a concussion is evident the pediatrician needs to release the athlete back to ANY play.

When the athlete is cleared to participate in CONTACT play after a diagnosis of a concussion, he must return under a progressive 5 step program. This program should be implemented over the course of one step per practice day. At practice coaches will monitor the athlete's feedback.

DAY 1. Light aerobic exercise with only forward movement, to slowly increase heart rate over 5-10 minutes. MONITOR the athlete's feedback for symptoms of headaches, nausea, fatigue, "just don't feel good"

DAY 2. Continued aerobic activity, dynamic stretching, moderate jogging, and brief running. Again MONITOR feedback.

DAY 3. Heavy non-contact activity, sprints, NON-contact football drills with lateral movement. MONITOR.

DAY 4. If the child/athlete is symptom-free after these 3 progressive steps he can return to controlled and monitored contact play. MONITOR closely.

DAY 5. Return to full contact play.

KEY POINTS

- Begin this return to play protocol only after the athlete is symptom free and has been cleared for play by the physician.
- Coaches must monitor for any symptoms of a concussion at EVERY stage of the protocol.
- Only one stage per day, during scheduled practices.
- Move to the next stage if the athlete remains symptom free for 24 hours following the trial.
- If symptoms return, the child must rest until the symptoms subside and then begin again at the first step in the protocol
- Coaches cannot evaluate or determine whether a player does or does not have a concussion.
- Haddam-Killingworth Field and Safety Coordinator must approve the athlete/child's return to play. Coaches must contact the Safety Coordinator with all suspected head injuries.