

## Return to Academics Protocol After Concussion/mild TBI

When a concussion occurs, a child looks normal, and teachers might be unaware of a student's cognitive difficulties during recovery. Rest is needed for the brain to recover from a concussion. Taxing the brain with academic activity can impede or prolong recovery. Most students will recover fully in days or weeks, but some will take longer to heal. Each child and each brain injury is different. If full recovery is not evident in three months, an IEP may be helpful to meet the specific learning challenges.

Not all students will need academic accommodations following concussion; consult with each student's healthcare provider. All steps in this academics protocol must be completed before a student-athlete is ready to proceed to a return-to-play protocol.

<p><b>Step 1. Total rest.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No mental exertion (computer, texting, video games, or homework), stay at home, no driving.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 2. Light mental activity.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 30 minutes of mental exertion, but no prolonged concentration, stay at home, no driving.</li> <li>• Progress to next level when able to handle up to 30 minutes of mental exertion without worsening of symptoms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3. Part-time School.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum accommodations (shortened day/schedule, built-in breaks, provide quiet place for mental rest, no significant classroom or standardized testing, modify rather than postpone academics, provide extra time, extra help, and modified assignments).</li> <li>• Progress to next level when able to handle 30-40 minutes of mental exertion without worsening of symptoms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 4. Part-time School.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate accommodations (no standardized testing, modified classroom testing, moderate decrease of extra time, help, and modification of assignments).</li> <li>• Progress to next level when able to handle 60 minutes of mental exertion without worsening of symptoms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 5. Full-time School.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal accommodations (no standardized testing, but routine testing ok; continued decrease of extra time, help, and modification of assignments; may require more supports in academically challenging subjects).</li> <li>• Progress to next level when able to handle all class periods in succession without worsening of symptoms AND medical clearance for full return to academics.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 6. Full-time School.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full academics with no accommodations (attends all classes, full homework).</li> </ul>

Should symptoms continue beyond 3-4 weeks, prolonged in-school support is required. Request a 504 meeting to plan and coordinate. If you have questions, contact Oregon's TBI coordinator at 1-877-872-7246.

### REMEMBER

Progression is individual. Every concussion is different. Student may start at any step as symptoms dictate and remain at each step as long as needed. Return to previous step if symptoms worsen. No return-to-play protocol should be implemented until after the student has returned to full academics.



# NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S

*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

Class/Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

## Classroom Concussion Assessment Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

### Instructions to the Student:

Read the symptoms in the left-hand column. For each symptom, circle one answer in the center column. Be honest and do not skip any questions. Then, answer the question at the bottom of this page. Give the sheet to your educator once complete.

### Instructions to the Educator:

Use the student's responses to the following questions to devise in-class, symptom-based accommodations. Refer back to Concussions in the Classroom for more specific explanations of the accommodations.

Symptoms	Circle ONE in each row	Accommodations
Headache	none mild moderate severe	- Mild/moderate: Allow classroom participation
Dizziness/balance problems	none mild moderate severe	- Avoid symptom triggers
Feeling sick to stomach (nausea)	none mild moderate severe	- If severe, refer to nurse/parent
Tiredness/drowsiness	none mild moderate severe	

Symptoms	Circle ONE	Accommodations
Sensitivity to light	no yes	- Move away from windows - Dim lights/draw shades - Allow sunglasses/hat in class
Sensitivity to noise	no yes	- Remove from loud environments - Reduce classroom noise - Avoid headphones and loud music
Feeling mentally foggy	no yes	- Give breaks between tasks - Simplify tasks
Difficulty concentrating on schoolwork	no yes	- Shorten task duration - Give breaks between tasks
Difficulty paying attention to teacher	no yes	- Front room seating - Work/test in quiet room
Difficulty remembering	no yes	- Provide class notes - Provide memory aids - Use alternative testing methods
Difficulty staying organized	no yes	- Use agenda/planner for schedule and due dates - Check comprehension of instructions - Use "to-do" lists and checklists

What tasks in school are most difficult for you? Please write specific examples.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



### Post-Concussion Symptom Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Instructions: For each item please indicate how much the symptom has bothered you over the past 2 days.

Symptom	None	1	Mild	2	3	Moderate	4	5	6	Severe
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Nausea	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Vomiting	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Dizziness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Visual problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Fatigue	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Sensitivity to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Sensitivity to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Numbness/tingling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Pain other than headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Feeling mentally foggy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Feeling slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Difficulty concentrating	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Difficulty remembering	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Drowsiness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Sleeping less than usual	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Sleeping more than usual	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Trouble falling asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Irritability	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Sadness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Nervousness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Feeling more emotional	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			

**Exertion:** Do these symptoms worsen with:

Physical Activity	Yes	No	Not applicable
Thinking/Cognitive Activity	Yes	No	Not applicable

**Overall Rating:** How different are you acting compared to your usual self?

Same as Usual 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very Different

**Activity Level:** Over the past two days, compared to what you would typically do, your level of activity has been \_\_\_\_\_ % of what it would be normally.

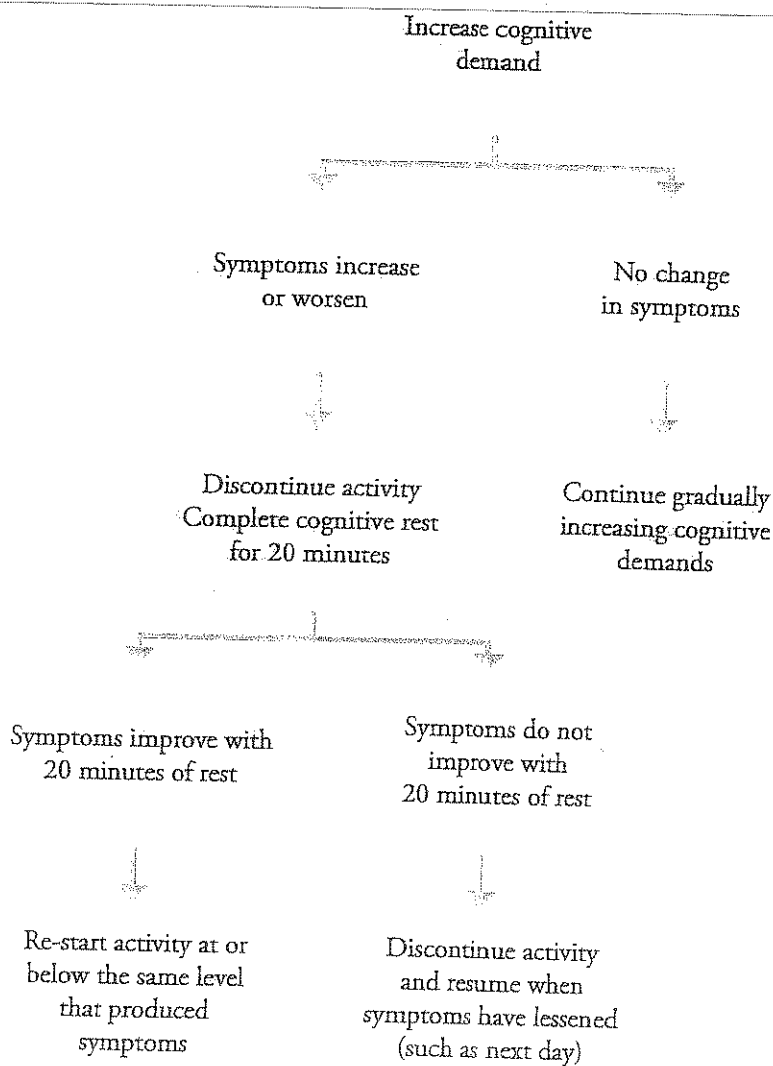
The emphasis in managing a concussed student in the classroom is to allow the student to participate and learn without worsening symptoms (which may delay healing).

As the student improves, gradually increase demands on the brain by increasing either:

- A. the amount of work
- B. the length of time spent on the work
- C. the type or difficulty of work

**\*\*\* IMPORTANT NOTE: Change only ONE of these things at a time.**

Below is a decision-making flow chart of what to do if increasing cognitive demand worsens symptoms.



NATIONWIDE  
CHILDREN'S

*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*