

# Sport-Related Concussion

## What is a sport- related concussion?

A sport-related concussion is a traumatic brain injury that may be caused by either a direct blow to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body as an indirect force being transmitted to the head during sports activity.

Concussion can happen in any sport and is more likely to happen when the athlete does not expect the force or impact. Concussion can be hard to assess and manage because the symptoms can begin shortly after the injury or take a longer time to appear. You may experience a variety of physical, cognitive, and behavioural symptoms.

In adults, most of the sport concussion symptoms resolve within 1 month.

## How is sport-related concussion assessed?

It is critical to stop playing your sport immediately after having a suspected concussion. If you continue to play, you will increase your risk for 'second impact syndrome.' Second impact syndrome happens when someone has a second concussion before the first one has healed. This can lead to rapid brain swelling and can be fatal.

A sport-related concussion can be recognized by athletes, parents, coaches, officials, and licensed healthcare providers. However, a formal diagnosis should be made by a physician or nurse practitioner, following a complete medical assessment. You will be looked at for signs of concussion as well as for head, neck, or spine injury. You should not be left alone and should be monitored during the first few hours after having a suspected concussion. Your symptoms can change as time passes and you should be seen again by a physician or nurse practitioner if your symptoms worsen.



**Athletes should be provided with education about concussion signs and symptoms, management of initial symptoms, and guidance on gradual return to school, work, and sport.**

## Important note

**Do not return to the game or to practice until a primary healthcare provider tells you that you can. Accurate diagnosis, management, and return to sport decisions are important at all levels of sport and for all types of sport.**

## How is sport-related concussion managed?

If you are diagnosed with a concussion, your primary healthcare provider will give you information about the concussion and what you can do to improve your chances of a full recovery. Make sure your family or support person has this information too, so they can help check your symptoms and progress as well.

Management of a concussion depends on :



**Your symptoms (types of symptoms, how long you've had them, how bad they are)**



**If you've had concussions before and how long ago those concussions happened**



**If you have migraine-type headaches, sleep problems, or mental health symptoms**

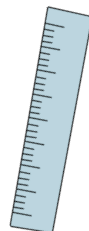


**If you are taking certain medications**

## When can I return to my regular activities?

You will need a brief period of relative rest in the first 24-48 hours after being diagnosed. After that, you should gradually return to your daily activities (e.g., school, work, social activities) if your symptoms do not get worse.

When returning to activities you want to avoid having more than a mild and brief increase in symptoms. This means you do not want more than a 2-point increase in symptom burden rating compared to your pre-activity symptom rating (i.e., avoid going from a level 4 headache pre-activity to having a level of 7 or 8 headache).



Athletes who do not recover after 1 month may benefit from referral to a physician in a concussion clinic and/or other rehabilitation specialists.

## Do I need to stop playing?

Until you are cleared to return to play by a primary healthcare provider, it is very important that you do not play. You should follow a step-wise process to return to sport. Most sports have a protocol for returning to play to help you decide when to return to sport. You may need to see a specialist in sport concussion management.

## Additional resources

Below is a list of resources you may find helpful to learn more about sport concussion , as well as tools that may help you with your recovery process.

### Concussion Awareness for Ages 15 and Up (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1puD-iVJcM>

### Crash Course Concussion Education (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7z-8ZhV3Tk4>

### Mild TBI (Concussion) Advice for returning to activity (pdf)

[https://www.santelaurentides.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/internet/cisss\\_laurentides/Soins\\_et\\_services/Traumatisme\\_craniocerebral\\_leger/INESSS\\_pamphlet\\_Mild-traumatic-brain-injury.pdf](https://www.santelaurentides.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/internet/cisss_laurentides/Soins_et_services/Traumatisme_craniocerebral_leger/INESSS_pamphlet_Mild-traumatic-brain-injury.pdf)

### Concussion 101 (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5okE0BvtPo&t=1s>