Algorithm 12.1

Return-to-Work Considerations

< 72 Hours
- Immediate period of rest to prompt recovery.
- Avoid activities that increase the risk for another concussion/mTBI.
- No bed rest exceeding 3 days.

> 72 Hours
Gradual return to activity as tolerated.

Do the patient's normal work activities involve significant physical demands?

No / **Yes**

Is there a high risk of injury/re-injury or any other safety concerns regarding work?

No / **Yes**

Return to work as tolerated.

Is the individual experiencing persistent symptoms or is unable to successfully resume pre-injury work duties?

No / **Yes**

Continue to monitor progressive return to work.

Consider referral to a structured program that promotes community integration (e.g., volunteer work).

Sidebar 1: Work Accommodations and Restrictions

Work restrictions should apply if:
- A work-specific task cannot be completed
- The work environment cannot be adapted
- Deficits cannot be accommodated
- Symptoms recur

Examples of Modifications:
- Length of work day
- Gradual work re-entry
- Additional time for tasks
- Change of job
- Environmental modifications

Exertion testing can be done (e.g., graduated treadmill exercise test).

Does this cause a return of symptoms?

No / **Yes**

Return to work as tolerated.

- Monitored progressive return to work is recommended.
- Low-level exercise may be of benefit.

A more in-depth assessment of symptoms and necessary work accommodations and restrictions should be identified (Sidebar 1).

Refer to specialists for in-depth vocational evaluation (Appendix 12.1) involving:
- Assessment of person
- Occupational and job demands
- Work environment
- Environmental supports
- Facilitators and barriers to successful return

Yes

Does the evaluation by specialists determine that return to work is possible?
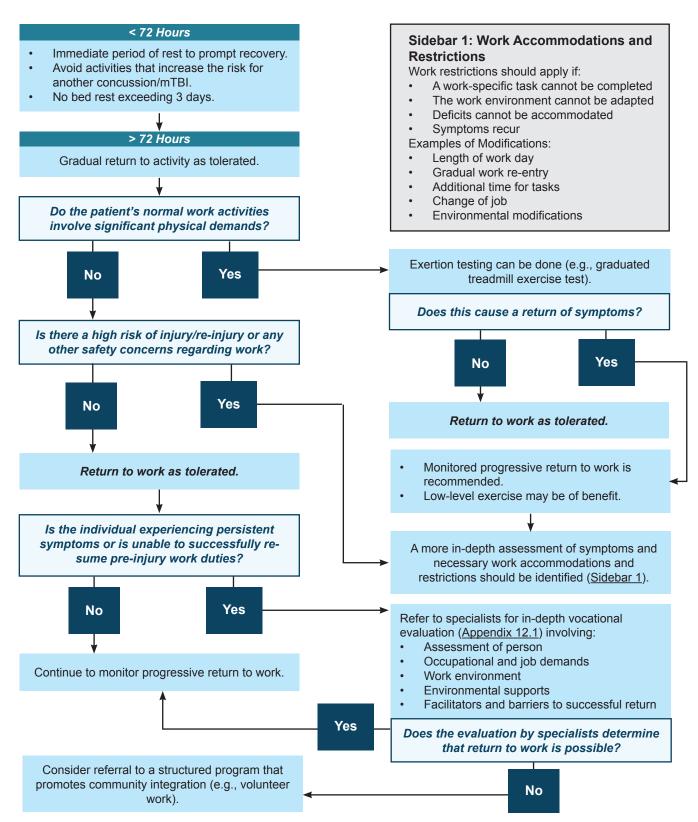
No

For a narrative description and guideline recommendations related to this algorithm, please refer to **Section 12.**