

**Mat-Su Borough School District Release for Student to Return to Play Following Concussion**

Following a concussion or suspected concussion, neurological and mental status examination must be completed by a "certified and qualified" health care provider, as defined in AS 14.30.142. Any student athlete determined to have a concussion must successfully complete the following steps prior to returning to full participation in their athletic activity.

Each athlete's rate of progression may differ dependent on previous history of head injuries, severity and duration of concussive symptoms, learning disabilities, medications, age, and risk of sport. Progression will be determined on an individual basis by the school team and requires complete absence of symptoms. If symptoms recur or there is deterioration in exam findings the athlete must return to the previous step. All steps must be completed before the athlete can return to unrestricted play. Each step requires an appropriate signature, and date.

Athlete's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1: The first 24-hours following a concussion or suspected concussion athlete must be evaluated by an appropriate health care provide .** As the baseline step of the Return to Play Progression, the athlete needs to have complete physical and cognitive rest and not be experiencing concussion symptoms for a **minimum of 24 hours**. *Keep in mind, the younger the athlete, the more conservative the treatment.* This rest period includes no: texting; television; reading; video games; computer work; driving, rough housing; or exercise.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Treating Health-Care Provider

**Step 2: Post-concussion IMPACT testing must be completed (administered by a school psychologist) on the athletes' first day back at school following the concussion or suspected concussion.**

- A. If IMPACT test results are not within normal limits the athlete must continue to refrain from undue physical and cognitive exertion. Athletes may be retested on IMPACT no sooner than two days after initial post-concussion assessment. Athlete can be re-tested at two-day intervals until IMPACT results are within normal limits. (Educational accommodations as determined by school team may possibly include: reduction in homework or participation in major test; as well as no physical activity including PE; and/or a 504 plan.). The school psychologist will contact athlete's parent with results.
  
- B. If IMPACT test results are within normal limits the athlete may begin a gradual program of functional recovery which will be monitored by the Activities Director in coordination with the School Nurse.

The above athlete's Impact results are within normal limits.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
School Psychologist

(See Back for Step 3 with guidelines for gradual recovery program and necessary signature by Activity Director in coordination with School Nurse.)



**Step 3: The following gradual exertion steps must be completed BEFORE an athlete is eligible for full return to play.**

It is important to monitor symptoms and cognitive function carefully during each increase of exertion. Athletes should only progress to the next level of exertion if they are not experiencing symptoms at the current level. If symptoms return at any step, an athlete should stop these activities as this may be a sign the athlete is pushing too hard. Only after additional rest, when the athlete is once again not experiencing symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours, should he or she start again at the previous step during which symptoms were experienced.

The Return to Play Progression process is best conducted through a team approach and by a health professional who knows the athlete's physical abilities and endurance. By gauging the athlete's performance on each individual step, a health care professional will be able to determine how far to progress the athlete on a given day. In some cases, the athlete may be able to work through one step in a single day, while in other cases it may take several days to work through an individual step. It may take several weeks to months to work through the entire 5-step progression. (www.cdc.gov)

**Step 1: Light Aerobic Exercise**

The Goal: only to increase an athlete's heart rate.

The Time: 5 to 10 minutes.

The Activities: exercise bike, walking, or light jogging.

Absolutely no weight lifting, jumping or hard running.

**Step 2: Moderate Exercise**

The Goal: limited body and head movement.

The Time: Reduced from typical routine

The Activities: moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, and moderate-intensity weightlifting

**Step 3: Non-contact Exercise**

The Goal: more intense but non-contact

The Time: Close to Typical Routine

The Activities: running, high-intensity stationary biking, the player's regular weightlifting routine, and non-contact sport-specific drills.

**Step 4: Practice**

The Goal: Reintegrate in full team practice.

**Step 5: Play**

The Goal: Return to competition.

Signature indicates that student has completed graduated recovery and is symptom-free at every step of physical and cognitive exertion.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_  
Athletic Director/School Nurse

Date \_\_\_\_\_