

Return – to – Play (RTP) Generalized Guidelines

Following a concussion, a student-athlete must meet the following criteria before he is able to begin to work toward getting back into sports:

- ❖ Clearance to begin RTP from a physician trained in concussion management
- ❖ He has returned to full days in school with no return of symptoms for an entire day
- ❖ He is able to handle full academic workload with no accommodations, and no return of symptoms
- ❖ If the student-athlete has baseline data available from SWAY Medical, he should be tested again to show a return to baseline levels.

This is never a “red light/green light” decision where the student-athlete is allowed to go right back into sports at full intensity and full contact. This must be a gradual process to make sure that the student-athlete is able to handle the physical exertion as well as the balance and coordination demanded by the sport. Athletic Trainers follow the commonly accepted guidelines for returning to sports. Because each sport is different, the plan should be customized for the demands of that sport. Here are the RTP guidelines to be followed at the direction of The Haverford School athletic trainers for returning to football.

- **Stage 1:** *No Activity*
- **Stage 2:** *Light aerobic exercise*
 - Stationary bike riding for 10-20 minutes, light resistance, low speed (<70% of maximum heart rate)
- **Stage 3:** *Individual, Sport-Specific training*
 - Agility drills
 - Sport-specific drills (individual or with one partner, NON-contact)
 - Throwing/catching, shooting on goal/net, running, dribbling/shooting baskets/lay-ups, skating with stick/puck handling drills, volleying, etc.
- **Stage 4:** *NON-contact practice/drills with team.*
 - Any skills or drills that the student-athlete can do in practice without the risk of contact or collision.
 - May also begin resistance (weight) training
- **Stage 5:** *FULL-contact, full-intensity practice with team*
- **Stage 6:** *Full-contact game play*

Only complete one stage per day. If ANY symptoms return, STOP activity for that day, and when symptoms subside, return to the previous stage on the next day.

For more information about this protocol, consult the “[Consensus statement on concussion in sport from the 6th International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Amsterdam, October, 2022](#)”