

Return to Play Guidelines after Head Injuries USA Hockey Safety and Protective Committee

The evaluation of an athlete with a suspected concussion should be prompt and thorough. Treatment is individualized according to patient age, concussion history, symptoms, signs and type of sport. All concussed athletes should be *cleared for return to play by a sports medicine professional*.

Based on *the Summary and Agreement Statement of the First International Conference on Concussion in Sport*, Vienna 2001 (www.bjsportmed.com <<http://www.bjsportmed.com>>)

Concussion in Sport Group (CISG) Protocol

Acute Response: When a player shows ANY symptoms or signs of a concussion-

- *The player should not be allowed to return to play in the current game or practice.
- *The player should not be left alone; and regular monitoring for deterioration is essential.
- *The player should be medically evaluated after the injury.
- *Return to play must follow a medically supervised stepwise process.
- *A player should never return to play when symptomatic. "When in doubt, sit them out!"

Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* unaware of situation* confusion* amnesia* loss of consciousness* headache* dizziness* nausea* loss of balance* flashing lights* ear ringing* blurred or double vision* vision* sleepiness* feeling dazed
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* loss of consciousness* altered mental status* poor coordination* slow to answer* poor concentration* nausea or vomiting* vacant stare* slurred speech* personality changes* inappropriate emotions* abnormal behavior

Return to Play Protocol

Return to play after a concussion follows a stepwise process:

- *Proceed to the next level if free of symptoms at the current level
- *If any symptoms or signs occur, drop back to the previous level and progress to the next level again after 24 hours

- 1.No activity, complete rest.
- 2.Light aerobic activity, exercise such a walking or stationary cycling.
- 3.Sports specific training- skating.
- 4.Non-contact training drills.
- 5.Full-contact training after clearance by a sports medicine professional
- 6.Return to competition