

## Return-to-Sport Protocol

The following outlines a return-to-sport process for an athlete who has been removed from training, practice, or competition due to a suspected or diagnosed concussion, regardless of whether or not the concussion was sustained or is suspected of having been sustained during a sport activity associated with Hamilton Sparta Soccer Club.

### 1. Receive Confirmation

Ensure that an athlete who has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion does not return to training, practice or competition until the athlete or, if the athlete is under 18 years of age, the athlete's parent or guardian provides confirmation to the designated person(s) that the athlete:

- a) Has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and has not been diagnosed as having a concussion, and
- b) Has been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition by the physician or nurse practitioner.

### 2. If Diagnosed with Having A Concussion

If an athlete has been diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion the athlete must proceed through the graduated return-to-sport steps.

### 3. Graduated Return-to-Sport Steps

It is important to note that typical recovery times vary from person to person, and that some individuals may require more time to progress through the graduated return-to-sport steps.

The graduated return-to-sport steps may include the following activities. It is typically recommended that an athlete with concussion **rest for 24 to 48 hours before beginning step 1.**

	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Goal of Step</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>STEP 1:</b> Symptom-limiting activities	Daily activities that do not make symptoms worse, such as moving around the home and simple chores	Gradual reintroduction of daily school, and work activities	At least 24 hours
<b>STEP 2:</b> Light aerobic activity	Light activities such as walking or stationary bicycle at slow to medium pace for 10 to 15 minutes	Increase heart rate	At least 24 hours
<b>STEP 3:</b> Sport-specific exercise	Individual physical activity such as running or kicking  No contact or head impact activities	Add movement	At least 24 hours
<b>STEP 4:</b> Non-contact training, practice drills	Harder training drills  Add resistance training. (if appropriate)	Exercise, coordination and increased thinking	At least 24 hours
<b>STEP 5:</b> Unrestricted Training & Practice	Unrestricted training and practice-with contact where applicable	Restore confidence and assess functional skills	At least 24 hours  Obtain clearance from physician or nurse practitioner before unrestricted training, practice or competition
<b>STEP 6:</b> Return-to-Sport	Unrestricted competition		

An athlete is typically ready to progress to the next step when they can do the activities at their current step without new or worsening symptoms. If at any step symptoms get worse, they should stop and return to the previous step before trying again. If symptoms do not improve or if the symptoms continue to worsen, the athlete should return to the physician or nurse practitioner.

#### **4. Share Medical Advice**

An athlete, or the athlete's parent or guardian must share the medical advice or recommendations they receive with the designated person(s) before being permitted to return to training, practice or competition through the graduated return-to-sport steps, if any.

#### **5. Disclosing Diagnosis**

The designated person(s) must inform the athlete or, if the athlete is under 18 years of age, the athlete's parent or guardian of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sport organization with which the athlete is registered or school that the athlete attends.

## **6. Medical Clearance**

The athlete, or the athlete's parent or guardian must provide the designated person(s) a confirmation of medical clearance by a physician or nurse practitioner before the athlete is permitted to move on to unrestricted training, practice or competition.

## **7. Record Progression**

The sport organization must make and keep a record of the athlete's progression through the graduated return-to-sport steps until the athlete, or the athlete's parent or guardian, has provided a confirmation of medical clearance by a physician or nurse practitioner to the designated person(s).

The sport organization must limit the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information to that which is reasonably necessary for the purpose of carrying out the sport organization's protocols, and to limit access to such personal information to only those individuals who require it for the purpose of fulfilling their duties or obligations under the Act. Personal information collected under this protocol shall be retained, disclosed and disposed of in a secure manner and in accordance with the sport organization's personal information retention policy. The sport organization shall create a retention policy for personal information.