

Harrison CSD Return To Play Protocol

(RTPP) Following a concussion

Concussion Management Protocol:

There are many risks to premature return to play including: a greater risk for a second concussion because of a lower concussion threshold, second impact syndrome (abnormal brain blood flow that can result in death), exacerbation of any current symptoms, and possibly increased risk for additional injury due to alteration in balance. These NYSPHAA current return to play recommendations are based on the most recent international expert opinion.

If an athlete shows any signs or symptoms of a concussion they will be prohibited from returning to play the day the concussion is sustained. The athlete will be referred to a physician for further evaluation. After a 5 day rest period, which includes 24 hours of being asymptomatic, an ImPACT test will be administered and results will be reviewed by a neuropsychologist. Upon review, the neuropsychologist may start the athlete on the six step return to play progression, or continue to withhold the athlete from activity. If the athlete becomes symptomatic, he/she will be rested for a full 24 hours before continuing the RTPP.

The cornerstone of proper concussion management is rest until all symptoms resolve and then a graded program of exertion before return to sport. The program is broken down into six steps in which only one step is covered a day with the possibility of 24 hour regression if symptomatic (drop back to previous level). The six steps involve the following:

- Day 1- Light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary bike, etc. No resistance training.
- Day 2- Higher impact, higher exertion, moderate aerobic activity. No resistance training.
- Day 3- Sport Specific exercise such as skating, running, etc. Progressive addition of resistance training may begin.
- Day 4- Non-contact training/skill drills.
- Day 5- Full contact training and intense aerobic activity in practice setting.
- Day 6- Return to full competition with clearance from school district physician.

Each step should take 24 hours so that an athlete would take approximately one week to proceed through the full rehabilitation protocol once they are asymptomatic at rest and with provocative exercise. If any concussion symptoms recur, the athlete should drop back to the previous level and try to progress after 24 hours of rest. The district medical director will make the final decision on return to school and/or interscholastic activity, including physical education.

The student-athlete should also be monitored for recurrence of symptoms due to mental exertion, such as reading, working on a computer, or taking a test.

