

Returning to a School after a Concussion:

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a trauma-induced alteration in mental status that may or may not involve a loss of consciousness. Patients who have sustained a concussion typically present with:

- *Post-Concussive Symptoms: Dizziness, Memory Loss, Headache, etc...
- *Difficulties with Vision
- *Difficulties in Balance and Coordination
- *Difficulties in Cognitive Function
- *Normal imaging studies

How does a concussion affect the student in the classroom?

Student-athletes who have sustained a concussion may need extra help to perform school-related activities. As the student's symptoms decrease during recovery, the extra help or support can be removed gradually.

Students returning to school after sustaining a concussion usually require classroom assistance in the following areas:

- *Written Instructions and Class Notes in larger point font (e.g. 18pt)
- *Early departure (e.g. 5min) from class to avoid congestion and noise
- *Limited time at a computer screen and limited brightness of the screen
- *Extra time allowed to complete homework, in-class assignments, and/or tests
- *Reduction in homework load
- *Frequent opportunity for rest breaks from class or work throughout the day
- *Limited to No activity in Physical Education and/or band class

Are there any warning signs to watch for?

School Personnel (e.g. administrator, teacher, counselor, school nurse, etc...) should be instructed to watch for the following as signs of difficulty:

- *Symptoms worsening (e.g. headache, tiredness, dizziness, etc...)
- *Increased difficulty paying attention or concentrating
- *Increased problems remembering or learning new information
- *Longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments
- *Greater irritability, less able to cope with stress

If you notice any of the following problems, or any unusual behavior, please direct the student via escort to the school nurses office and/or contact your Team Athletic Trainer.

For More Information:

Centers for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/>

National Athletic Trainers' Association: <http://www.nata.org/health-issues/concussion>