

RETURN-TO-WORK

CONCUSSION AND VISION



CONCUSSION

a concussion is a brain injury resulting in a sudden shaking or jarring of the brain inside the skull



VISUAL SYMPTOMS

concussions have visual implications such as blurry vision, involuntary eye movement, sensitivity to light, etc. This symptoms may be difficult to identify in athletes presenting similar pre-existing symptoms due to their vision impairment

SO, YOU HAVE A CONCUSSION. WHAT ARE SOME AVAILABLE ASSESSMENTS?

Employees who are blind or visually impaired may benefit from additional rehabilitation such as:

- Orientation and mobility assessment
- Functional Vision assessment
- Vision Therapy
- Vestibular and Oculomotor assessment

Make sure the assessments are done by a certified professional

WHEN CAN I START TO RETURN-TO-WORK?



GUIDANCE FROM PHYSICIAN

it is important to follow the Return-to-Work guideline as per instruction from the medical professional you are seeing for your concussion



INITIAL REST PERIOD

an initial 48 hour rest period is key to give your brain time to rest before starting to return to any activities



GENERAL RULES FOR GUIDELINE

1. each stage is at least 24 hours. Progress to the next stage only if activities are tolerated without new or worsening symptoms
2. if symptoms reappear, return to the previous stage for at least 24 hours
3. if symptoms don't improve, but continue to get worse, contact your doctor or get medical help immediately

1

INITIAL COGNITIVE AND PHYSICAL REST

ACTIVITY

Rest for 24-48 hours. Stay at home and try simple activities such as listening to quiet music

GOAL

Gradual re-introduction of typical activities

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Routine check-in, avoid bright lights/glare, use noise cancelling headphones, avoid overstimulating environments

2

LIGHT COGNITIVE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY

Add light activities such as chores, short walks, reading, using a screened device

GOAL

Increase tolerance to cognitive work

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Consider lighting and acoustics, increase font size/magnification on print, adjust screen brightness as necessary, use of a sighted guide or cane, avoid overstimulating environments

3

PREPARE TO RETURN TO WORK

ACTIVITY

Add more cognitive and physical activity

GOAL

Increase tolerance to cognitive work specific to occupation

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Work closely with an orientation and mobility specialist to ensure safety review, adjust screen brightness and font size as necessary, use of sighted guide or cane, if glare is an issue - try different glare lenses, consider lighting and acoustics

4

REDUCED WORKING HOURS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS

ACTIVITY

Begin your return to work. Use the accommodations needed.
Gradually increase working hours

GOAL

Increase work activities

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Provide alternative quiet work space, consider print and technology accommodations, encourage self-advocacy, consider lighting and acoustics

5

REGULAR WORKING HOURS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS

ACTIVITY

Gradually decrease accommodations as tolerated.

GOAL

Increase work to full hours

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Provide alternative quiet work space, consider print and technology accommodations, encourage self-advocacy, consider lighting and acoustics

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RETURN TO WORK

ACTIVITY

Full return to regular work schedule without accommodations

GOAL

Return to full work activities and catch up on missed work

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Once employee has been cleared for full return-to-work without accommodations, there are no extra needed modifications

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

- parachute.ca for more concussion guidelines and protocols
- catonline.com for more concussion education
- canadianblindsports.ca for more on athletes who are blind or visually impaired