



Kaiser Permanente Napa-Solano Area Youth Sports Concussion Clinic

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

While Recovering From A Sports Concussion

WHAT YOU CAN DO WHILE YOUR BRAIN HEALS

Activity restrictions are put in place during concussion recovery to allow the necessary time for your brain to heal. However, without your sport, and with reduced screen time, that is less time looking at phones, tablets, computers, videogames or television, it may be hard sometimes not to become bored. The following activity list is designed to provide suggestions of things you might do or try with activities keyed to CIF Return to Play Guideline levels. Your provider will keep you informed in regards to your current stage as you move through this process. As always, listen to your body and if your symptoms return or worsen, stop that activity immediately!

Stage I

During Stage One, rest is essential and no activities that require physical or mental exertion should be pursued. Some activity options during this stage could include:

- Simple crafts such as drawing, doodling, coloring, molding clay, knitting, or quilting, photography, or scrapbooking
- Listening to audiobooks or podcasts or relaxing music at a low volume
- Writing or journaling (on paper)
- Looking through photo albums
- Having friends visit, one at time. Socializing should be brief and in calm places with quiet people
- Talking to friends or family members on the phone
- Beauty activities such as a manicure or pedicure or trying out a new hairstyle
- Play with a Zen sand garden
- Meditation or prayer
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Aromatherapy (relaxing candles, etc.)
- Watching fish in a fish tank

- Relaxing in a quiet park or similar setting
- Positive affirmations
- Deep breathing relaxation exercises
- Napping

During Stage One, which often lasts a few days, you should be getting as much rest as possible.

Stage II

At stage two there is a gradual progression from easier to more complex and demanding activities. During this interval some of the following activities could be considered:

- Cooking and baking
- More complex crafts or projects such as sculpture, painting, origami, jewelry making, model building or Legos.
- Drawing or painting with different media such as acrylic, water color, pastel, or charcoal
- Reading magazines or books for pleasure
- Board games, cards, checkers, or chess
- Puzzles, sudokhu, crosswords, word search
- De-cluttering or reorganizing one's room
- Light gardening activities or watering plants

- Non-aerobic sports activities such as walking, billiards, archery, playing catch, yoga (not hot), darts, bowling, badminton, ping pong
- Getting outdoors and enjoying nature
- Walking one's pets or spending time with quiet animals
- Going fishing or relaxing by a lake or river
- Star gazing
- Watching a sporting event
- Short hikes
- Playing a musical instrument
- Simple household chores
- Wii or XBOX Kinect types of games
- Golf
- Tai Chi / Karate / Qi Gong

Under the direction of your provider, you will gradually increase participation in aerobic activities designed to elevate your heart rate but are low risk for acquiring a second concussion. These can include:

- Brisk walking, jogging, stationary cycling, dancing, or swimming
- At the final substage, a return to sports specific drills and training with no physical contact is recommended. This can include dribbling, stickhandling, keep ups, or whatever specific activities can help recondition you to return to your her specific sport. Additional more general activities for this stage may include:
 - Aerobics and Calisthenics (squats, push ups, planks, etc.)
 - Light weight training activities
 - Pilates

Stage III

At Stage Three you will begin to return to practice your specific sport with a return to some potential light contact. You should be able to do all activities in Stage II without any symptom return. It is still important at this stage to minimize risk of a second concussion.

- For Dance and Cheer – no stunts
- For Soccer – no heading the ball
- For Figure Skating – no jumping
- Outside of sports, shopping at a mall, or being around larger groups of people at a sporting event, fair, dance, or other activity can be helpful in assessing readiness for return to activity.

Stage IV

At Stage Four a person has returned to their sport competitively and without restriction.

While there are no specific restrictions at this stage it remains critical to continue listen to one's body should symptoms recur; a return suggests you may still need more time to heal.

While a concussion can occur in any sport and to anyone, we strongly encourage you to play your sport in a way that minimizes a recurrence of your injury. Repeated concussions can have a cumulative affect meaning that they may become easier to sustain, have more prominent symptoms and be slower to heal, or even not fully heal.

During ALL Stages

Other things that you can do or should avoid in order to optimize your recovery from concussion include:

- Eating healthy and maintaining good nutrition
- Staying hydrated
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Healthy stress management
- Positive social contact
- Maintain a positive attitude and outlook
- Minimizing screen time
- Avoid drugs and alcohol

For most people, a single uncomplicated concussion resolves quickly and completely. While this injury isn't visible, it is important that we all take it seriously. Following the plan developed with your concussion clinic provider will help to optimize your recovery and get you back in the game.