



# CIF Concussion Return to Play (RTP) Protocol



**CA STATE LAW AB 2127 STATES THAT RETURN TO PLAY (I.E., COMPETITION) CANNOT BE SOONER THAN 7 DAYS AFTER EVALUATION BY A PHYSICIAN (MD/DO) WHO HAS MADE THE DIAGNOSIS OF CONCUSSION, AND ONLY AFTER COMPLETING A GRADUATED RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL.**

**Instructions:**

- A graduated return to play protocol **MUST** be completed before you can return to FULL COMPETITION. Below is the CIF RTP Protocol.
  - A certified athletic trainer (AT), physician, or identified concussion monitor (e.g., athletic director, coach), must initial each stage after you successfully pass it.
  - You should be back to normal academic activities before beginning Stage II, unless otherwise instructed by your physician.
- After Stage I, you cannot progress more than one stage per day (or longer if instructed by your physician).
- If symptoms worsen at any stage in the progression, IMMEDIATELY STOP any physical activity and follow up with your school's AT, other identified concussion monitor, or your physician. In general, if you are symptom-free the next day, return to the previous stage where symptoms had not occurred.
- Seek further medical attention if you cannot pass a stage after 3 attempts due to concussion symptoms, or if you feel uncomfortable at any time during the progression.

**You must have written physician (MD/DO) clearance to begin and progress through the following Stages as outlined below, or as otherwise directed by your physician. Minimum of 6 days to pass Stages I and II.**

Date & Initials	Stage	Activity	Exercise Example	Objective of the Stage
	I	Limited physical activity that does not exacerbate symptoms for at least 2 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Untimed walking okay</li> <li>• No activities requiring exertion (weight lifting, jogging, P.E. classes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery and reduction/elimination of symptoms</li> </ul>
	II-A	Light aerobic activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10-15 minutes (<i>min</i>) of brisk walking or stationary biking</li> <li>• <b>Must be performed under direct supervision by designated individual</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase heart rate to <math>\leq 50\%</math> of perceived maximum (<i>max</i>) exertion (e.g., <math>&lt; 100</math> beats per min)</li> <li>• Monitor for symptom return</li> </ul>
	II-B	Moderate aerobic activity ( <i>Light resistance training</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-30 min jogging or stationary biking</li> <li>• Body weight exercises (squats, planks, push-ups), max 1 set of 10, <math>\leq 10</math> min total</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase heart rate to 50-75% max exertion (e.g., 100-150 bpm)</li> <li>• Monitor for symptom return</li> </ul>
	II-C	Strenuous aerobic activity ( <i>Moderate resistance training</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-45 min running or stationary biking</li> <li>• Weight lifting <math>\leq 50\%</math> of max weight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase heart rate to <math>&gt; 75\%</math> max exertion</li> <li>• Monitor for symptom return</li> </ul>
	II-D	Non-contact training with sport-specific drills ( <i>No restrictions for weightlifting</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-contact drills, sport-specific activities (cutting, jumping, sprinting)</li> <li>• No contact with people, padding or the floor/mat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add total body movement</li> <li>• Monitor for symptom return</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prior to beginning Stage III, please make sure that written physician (MD/DO) clearance for return to play, after successful completion of Stages I and II, has been given to your school's concussion monitor. <i>You must be symptom-free prior to beginning Stage III.</i></b></p>				
	III	Limited contact practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlled contact drills allowed (no scrimmaging)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase acceleration, deceleration and rotational forces</li> <li>• Restore confidence, assess readiness for return to play</li> <li>• Monitor for symptom return</li> </ul>
		Full contact practice Full unrestricted practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to normal training, with contact</li> <li>• Return to normal unrestricted training</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>MANDATORY:</u> You must complete at least ONE contact practice before return to competition, or if non-contact sport, ONE unrestricted practice</b> (<i>If contact sport, highly recommend that Stage III be divided into 2 contact practice days as outlined above</i>)</p>				
	IV	Return to play (competition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal game play (competitive event)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to full sports activity without restrictions</li> </ul>

**Athlete's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Injury** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Concussion Diagnosis:** \_\_\_\_\_