



Return to School Plan

The Return to Learning (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) Plans have been developed in partnership with Parachute and are based on the most recent research and recommendations of the expert scientific community on concussion, that is the Canadian Guidelines on Concussion in Sport, July 2017 and the Berlin Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport, October 2016. The Return to School Plan (Return to Learning/Returning to Physical Activity) is for parents/guardians and the school Collaborative Team to communicate and track a student's progress through the steps of the Return to Learning and Return to Physical Activity plan, following completion of the Home Concussion Return to School Plan.

This section includes:

- background Information on the Concussion Recovery Process
- general Procedures for Return to School Plan
- instructions for a Return to School Plan
- return to School Plan Form/Medical Clearance Form

Background Information on the Concussion Recovery Process

A student with a diagnosed concussion needs to follow a Return to School Plan which includes an individualized and gradual Return to Learning (RTL) plan and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) plan. In developing the Return to School Plan, the RTL process is designed to meet the particular needs of the student, as there is not a pre-set plan of strategies and/or approaches to assist a student returning to their learning activities. In contrast the RTPA plan follows an internationally recognized graduated approach. The management of a student concussion is a shared responsibility, requiring regular communication, between the home, school (Collaborative Team) and sport organizations with which the student is involved and registered with consultation from the student's medical doctor or nurse practitioner and/or other licensed healthcare providers (for example, nurses, physiotherapists, chiropractors and athletic therapists).

There are two parts to a student's RTL and RTPA plan. This first part occurs at home (Appendix E Home Concussion Management) and prepares the student for the second part which occurs at school. The school part of the plan begins with:

- A meeting with the principal/designate to provide the parent(s)/guardian/caregiver information on:
 - the school part of the RTL and RTPA plan: and
 - the Collaborative Team participants and parent(s)/guardian/caregiver role on the team.
- A student assessment to determine possible strategies and/or approaches for student learning.
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The home stages of the Return to School Plan for RTL and RTPA (Initial Rest to Step 2 for RTS and Initial Rest to Step 2b of RTPA) focuses on a student's progression through the home steps of the RTL and RTPA plan. It has been designed to provide direction for, and documentation of the stages of the RTL and RTPA plan.

General Procedures for a Return to School Plan

Steps 3a to 4b of the Return to School Plan for Return to Learning (RTL) and steps 3 to 6 of the Return to School Plan for Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) focuses on a student's progression through the school steps of the Return to Learning (RTL) plan and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) plan. It has been designed to provide direction for, and documentation of the steps of the RTL and RTPA Plan.

The school part of the plan begins with:

- A parent/guardian/caregiver and principal/designate meeting (for example, in-person, phone conference, video conference, email) to provide information on:
 - the school part of the RTL and RTPA plan; and
 - the Collaborative Team members and their role (for example, parent/guardian, student, principal/designate, team lead, teacher(s), medical doctor or nurse practitioner and/or appropriate licensed healthcare provider).
- A student conference to determine the individualized RTL plan and to identify:
 - the RTL learning strategies and/or approaches required by the student based on the post-concussion symptoms; and
 - the best way to provide opportunities for the permissible activities.

The general procedures for return to school are:

- Steps 3a to 4b of the Concussion Return to School Plan for Return to Learning (RTL) and Steps 3 to 6 of the Concussion Return to School Plan for Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) occur at school and where appropriate the RTPA part of the plan may occur at sport practices (for example, student is not enrolled in physical education).
- Inform parent/guardian/caregiver/student of the importance to disclose a concussion diagnosis with any outside coach/sport organization(s) with which the student is involved or registered.
- Steps are not days - each step must take a minimum of 24 hours and the length of time needed to complete each stage will vary based on the severity of the concussion and the student.
- Completion of the RTL and RTPA plans may take 1-4 weeks.
- A student moves forward to the next step when activities at the current stage are tolerated and the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms.
- A student is tolerating an activity if their symptoms are not exacerbated (aggravated, intensified, made worse).



- While the RTL and RTPA steps are inter-related they are not interdependent. A student's progress through the steps of RTL is independent from their progression through the RTPA steps. However, students must have completed Step 4a and 4b of RTL and Stage 4 of RTPA and have obtained Medical Clearance prior to beginning Step 5 of RTPA.
- Until a student has successfully completed all steps in the RTL plan they must not participate in the following physical activities where the risk of re-injury is possible:
 - full participation in the physical education curricular program;
 - intramural activities;
 - full participation in on-contact interschool activities; or
 - participation in practice for a contact sport.
- A student that has no symptoms when they return to school, must progress through all the RTL steps and RTPA steps and remain symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours in each step prior to moving to the next step.
- The plan does not replace medical advice.
- During all steps of RTP and in Steps 1-4 of RTPA:
 - if symptoms return or new symptoms appear, the student returns to previous step for a minimum of 24 hours and only participates in activities that can be tolerated.

During steps 5 and 6 of RTPA:

- If symptoms return or new symptoms appear, the student must return to medical doctor/nurse practitioner to have the Medical Clearance re-assessed.
- During all steps of RTL and RTPA if symptoms worsen over time, follow school (collaborative team procedures) for contacting parents/guardian/caregiver to inform them that the student needs a follow-up medical assessment.
- Progression through the plan is individual, timelines and activities may vary.
- Upon completion of the RTL and RTPA plans, this form is returned to the principal/designate form filing as per school board's procedures.

Instructions for the Return to School Plan:

- At each step, the Return to School Plan for Return to Learning (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) (hard copy/electronic) will go back and forth between the school and home.
- Review the activities (permitted and not permitted) at each step prior to beginning the plan.
- The school (for example, teacher, collaborative team lead) provides appropriate activities and records student's progress by checking, dating, completion of each step and communicating information (form) to parent/guardian.
- Within each step, the parent/guardian completes, checks, dates and signs the student's tolerance to those activities (that is, no returning, new or worsening symptoms) giving permission for the student to progress to the next step and returns completed form to school.



Strategies for Return to School Plan – Return to Learning

Accommodations

Instructional Accommodations	Environmental Accommodations	Assessment Accommodations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddy/peer tutoring • Note taking assistance • Duplicated notes • Organization coaching • Time management aids • More frequent breaks • Visual cueing • Reduced/uncluttered format • Repetition of information • Rewording/rephrasing • Extra time for processing • Taped texts • Computer options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative workspace • Strategic seating • Proximity to instructor • Reduction of audio/visual stimuli • Study carrel • Minimizing background noise • Quiet setting • Use of headphones • Special lighting (low intensity is usually preferred) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended time limits • Verbatim scribing • Oral responses, including audio tapes • More frequent breaks • Prompts to return student's attention to task • Reduced uncluttered format • Extra time for processing • Reduction in the number of tasks used to assess a concept or skill • Computer options

Intervention Supports

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Providing class assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Providing extra help <input type="checkbox"/> Involving parent/guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling in school <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker <input type="checkbox"/> Daily tracking sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Referral to school support team <input type="checkbox"/> Student Success
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Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, The Individual Education Plan (IEP) A Resource Guide 2004 and in consultation with Dr. Charles Tator founder of Think First Canada.



Return to School Plan

Return to Learning (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA)

Appendix F

The Return to Learning (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) Plans have been created from the information at OPHEA and Parachute, and are based on the most recent research and recommendations of the expert scientific community on concussion, that is the Canadian Guidelines on Concussion in Sport, July 2017 and the Berlin Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport, October 2016. The RTL and RTPA plans are inter-related however, they are not interdependent. A student's progress through the steps of RTL is independent from their progression through the RTPA steps. Different students will progress at different rates.

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Return to Learning (RTL) - Step 3a:

- the student begins with an initial time at school of 2 hours; and
- the individual RTL plan is developed by Collaborative Team following the student conference and assessment of the student's individual needs determining possible strategies and/or approaches for student learning.

Activities permitted if tolerated by student:

- activities from previous step (Home Concussion Management Appendix);
- school work for up to 2 hours per day in smaller chunks (completed at school) working up to ½ day of cognitive activity; and
- adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches.

Activities that are not permitted at this step:

- tests/exams/homework;
- music class;
- assemblies; and
- field trips.

School Responsibility:

- the student has demonstrated they can tolerate up to a half day of cognitive activity; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parents/guardians/caregivers.

School Initial (for example, collaborative team lead/designate): _____

Date: _____



Home Responsibility:

- the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms;
- the student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, or new symptoms, and must return to the previous stage for a minimum of 24 hours;
- the student has exhibited or reported a worsening of symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent back to school.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature: _____

Date: _____

Step 3b

The student continues attending school half time with gradual increase in school attendance time, increased school work and a decrease in the adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches.

Activities permitted if tolerated by student:

- activities from previous step
- school work for 4-5 hours per day, in smaller chunks (for example, 2-4 days of school/week)
- homework - up to 30 minutes per day
- decrease adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches; and
- classroom testing with accommodations.

Activities that are not at step

- Standardized tests/exam

School Responsibility:

- the student has demonstrated they can tolerate up to 4-5 hours of the cognitive activities listed; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian/caregiver.

School Initial (for example, collaborative team lead/designate): _____ Date_____



Home Responsibility:

- The student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms;
- The student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, or new symptoms, and must return to the previous stage for a minimum of 24 hours;
- The student has exhibited or reported a worsening of symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner; and
- The Return to School Plan is sent back to school.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature: _____

Date: _____



Step 4a

Full day school, minimal adaptation or learning strategies and/or approaches nearly normal workload.

Activities permitted if tolerated by student:

- activities from previous step;
- nearly normal cognitive activities;
- routine school work as tolerated; and
- minimal adaptation of learning strategies or approaches (start to eliminate adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches).

Activities that are NOT permitted

- Standardized tests/exams.

School Responsibility:

- the student has demonstrated they can tolerate a full day of school and a nearly normal workload with minimal adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian.

School Initial (for example, collaborative team lead/designate): _____

Date _____



Home Responsibility:

- the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms;
- the student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, or new symptoms, and must return to the previous stage for a minimum of 24 hours;
- the student has exhibited or reported a worsening of symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent back to school.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver/Signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments:



Step 4b

At school (full day, without adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches):

Activities permitted if tolerated by student:

- normal cognitive activities;
- routine school work;
- full curriculum load (attend all classes, all homework, tests);
- standardized tests/exams; and
- full extracurricular involvement (non-sport/non-physical activity, for example, debating club, drama club, chess club).

School Responsibility:

- the student has demonstrated they can tolerate a full day of school without adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian/caregiver.

School Initial (for example, collaborative team lead/designate): _____

Date: _____



Home Responsibility:

- the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms;
- the student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, or new symptoms, and must return to the previous step for a minimum of 24 hours; and
- the student has exhibited or reported a worsening of symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature: _____

Date: _____



Return to Physical Activity (RTPA)

Step 3

Simple locomotor activities/sport-specific exercise to add movement.

Activities permitted if tolerated by student:

- activities from previous step (20-30 minutes walking/stationary cycling/elliptical/recreational dancing at a moderate pace);
- simple individual drills (for example, running/throwing drills, skating drills in hockey, shooting drills in basketball) in predictable and controlled environments with no risk of re-injury; and
- restricted recess activities (for example, walking).

Activities that are not permitted at this step:

- full participation in physical education or Daily Physical Activity, participation in intramural;
- full participation in interschool practices:
- interschool competitions;
- resistance or weight training;
- body contact or head impact activities (for example, heading a soccer ball); and
- jarring motions (for example, high speed stops, hitting a baseball with a bat).

School Responsibility:

- the student has demonstrated they can tolerate simple individual drills/sport specific drills as listed in permitted activities; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian/caregiver.

School Initial (for example, collaborative team lead/designate): _____

Date: _____



Home Responsibility:

- the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms;
- the student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, or new symptoms, and must return to the previous step for a minimum of 24 hours;
- the student has exhibited or reported a worsening of symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent back to school.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature _____

Date _____

Comments:



Step 4

Progressively increase physical activity. Non-contact training drills to add coordination and increased thinking.

Activities permitted if tolerated by student:

- activities from previous stage;
- more complex training drills (for example, passing drills in soccer and hockey);
- physical activity with no body contact (for example, dance, badminton);
- participation in practices for non-contact interschool sports;
- progressive resistance training may be started; and
- recess - physical activity running/games with no body contact, daily physical activity

Activities that are not permitted at this stage:

- full participation in physical education;
- participation in intramurals;
- body contact or head impact activities (for example, heading a soccer ball); and
- participation in interschool contact sport practices, or interschool games/competitions (non-contact and contact).

School Responsibility:

- the student has completed the activities in Step 4 as applicable;
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian/caregiver; and
- a Concussion Medical Clearance Form (end of this Appendix) is sent home to parent/guardian/caregivers.

School Initial _____ Date: _____



Home Responsibility:

- the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms, or worsening symptoms;
- the student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, or new symptoms, and must return to the previous stage for a minimum of 24 hours;
- the student has exhibited or reported a worsening of symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner; and
- the School Concussion Management Form (Return to School Plan) is sent back to school.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

Before progressing to Step 5, the student must:

- have completed Step 4a and 4b of RTL (full day at school without adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches);
- have completed Step 4 of RTPA and be symptom-free; and
- obtain a signed medical clearance from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner (Medical Concussion Clearance form Appendix F).

Please Note: Premature return to contact sports (full practice and game play) may cause a significant setback in recovery

Step 5

Following medical clearance, full participation in all non-contact physical activities (that is, non-intentional body contact) and full contact training/practice in contact sports.

Activities if tolerated by the student:

- physical education:
- intramural programs; and
- full contact training/practice in contact interschool sports.

Activities that are NOT permitted at this stage:

- competition (for example, games, meets, events) that involves body contact



School Responsibility:

- the student has completed the applicable physical activities in Stage 5; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian/caregiver.

School Initial: _____ Date: _____

Home Responsibility:

- The student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms, new symptoms;
- The student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms or new symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner for a Medical Clearance reassessment; and
- The Return to School Plan is sent back to school.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments:



Step 6

Unrestricted return to contact sports. Full participation in contact sport games/competitions.

School Responsibility:

- the student has successfully completed full participation in contact sports; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent home to parent/guardian/caregiver.

School Initial: _____ Date: _____

Home Responsibility:

- the student has not exhibited or reported a return of symptoms or new symptoms;
- the student has exhibited or reported a return of symptoms or new symptoms and must return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner for a Medical Clearance reassessment; and
- the Return to School Plan is sent back to school for documentation purposes.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

The completed Return to School Plan stays in the OSR for 3-years



Medical Concussion Clearance Form

Return to School (RTS) and Step 4 of the Concussion Management Plan for Return to Physical Activity (RTPA). The student must be medically cleared by a medical doctor/nurse practitioner prior to moving on to full participation in non-contact physical activities and full contact practices (RTPA Step 5).

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

I have examined this student and confirm they are medically cleared to participate in the following activities:

- Full participation in Physical Education classes
- Full participation in Intramural physical activities (non-contact)
- Full participation in non-contact Interschool Sports (practices and competition)
- Full-contact training/practice in contact Interschool Sports

Other Comments:

Medical Doctor/Nurse Practitioner

Forms completed by other licensed healthcare professionals should not be otherwise accepted.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

A student who has received Medical Clearance and has a recurrence of symptoms or new symptoms appear, must immediately remove themselves from play, inform their parent/guardian/caregiver/teacher/coach, and return to medical doctor or nurse practitioner for Medical Clearance reassessment before returning to physical activity.