

Returning to School After a Concussion

After your child has been diagnosed with a concussion, they should have 1 to 2 days of rest before starting the steps below. During this time, your child should relax at home. They can do calm activities like talking with family and friends or coloring. This handout tells you more about the steps your child needs to take before going back to school.

Steps for returning to school

Your child should follow each step listed below for **at least 1 day** before moving to the next step. **If any of your child's concussion symptoms get worse, stop that activity.** Then go back to having your child do the activities in the step before for the rest of that day. Try moving to the next step again the next day. By doing these activities, your child can slowly start to focus again after a concussion.

Talk with your child's school about these steps before your child returns to school. Your child's care team will give you a note explaining this information to the school.

Step 1: Have your child do activities at home that do not give them symptoms.

Have your child try reading, texting, and looking at a screen **for 5 to 15 minutes at a time.**

They can slowly spend more time doing these activities if they do not make their symptoms worse.

Step 2: Have your child do simple focusing and thinking activities.

Have your child try to do activities that require them to think a little bit more, like homework, reading, or playing board games, card games, or video games.

Step 3: Have your child return to school part-time.

When your child can focus for **more than 1 hour at a time**, they can go back to school part-time. They could go to school for a half-day instead of a full day. When they first go back to school they should take a break every **30 minutes to 1 hour** or when their symptoms worsen.

Step 4: Have your child return to school full-time.

If your child can go to school for half days without symptoms, they can slowly start going to school for a longer time each day.

After your child can attend full days of school, they can start taking tests again. Your child may need special care, like **only taking 1 test per day.** They should also have extra time to take tests and take breaks if they feel any symptoms.

If your child still has concussion symptoms after two weeks, please tell your pediatrician. They can send a referral to **Stanford Medicine Children's Health** by calling **(650) 723-0993**.