Concussion
Temporarily altered brain function after trauma to the head

Common symptoms
- Somatic symptoms: Headache
- Cognitive symptoms: Amnesia, feeling in a fog
- Emotional symptoms: Lability, mood disorders
- Behavioural signs: Irritability
- Physical signs: Loss of consciousness, disturbed gait/balance
- Cognitive impairment: Slow reaction times, difficulty concentrating
- Sleep disturbance: Insomnia

One step at a time
Recommend a gradual return to work and play, which is thought to reduce risks of:
- Delayed recovery
- Persistent symptoms
- Poor cognitive performance
- Other musculoskeletal injuries
- Long term consequences
  - Including chronic traumatic encephalopathy

Suggested recovery progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work or school</th>
<th>2–3 days minimum</th>
<th>Sx</th>
<th>2 weeks minimum</th>
<th>Sx</th>
<th>5–10 days minimum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider time off or adaptation</td>
<td>Gradual return to normal as symptoms permit</td>
<td>If symptoms permit</td>
<td>Return to activities of daily living</td>
<td>If symptoms permit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>Advise against</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Advise against</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport, with risk of head impact</td>
<td>Advise against</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and screen watching</td>
<td>Minimise</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduated return to sporting activity
Before sport and other activities with a predictable risk of head injury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Light aerobic activity</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moderate exercise</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low risk training drills</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Full risk training</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Return to activity</td>
<td>Normal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum head impact risk for activities
- Brisk walking
- Static cycling
- Running or running drills
- More complex training
- Can add resistance exercise

If symptoms return, go back to previous stage

Progress if symptoms have resolved
Progress if back to normal work/school
Review by doctor

Minimum time between injury and return to activity with a predictable risk of head impact
- 23 days (children)
- 19 days (adults)

Current UK guidance recommends that people recovering from concussion should be reviewed/assessed by a doctor before beginning activities which risk exposure to head trauma. The doctor’s role is to ensure the patient:
- has returned to work or school
- is symptom free

is following the “graduated return to sporting activity” as above

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