



Return-to-Sport Protocol

The following outlines a return-to-sport process for an athlete who has been removed from training, practice, or competition due to a suspected or diagnosed concussion, regardless of whether or not the concussion was sustained or is suspected of having been sustained during a sport activity associated with Dive Ontario.

The Club Designated Person oversees the return-to-sport protocol for a concussed athlete at their club.

1. Receive Confirmation

Ensure that an athlete who has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion does not return to training, practice, or competition until the athlete, or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age, provides confirmation to their Club Designated Person that the athlete has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner.

If the athlete **has not** been diagnosed as having a concussion, the athlete, or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age, must provide medical documentation (completed *Dive Ontario Medical Assessment Form*) to the Club Designated Person that the athlete has been medically cleared to return to training, practice, or competition by a physician or nurse practitioner. The athlete's parents or emergency contact should continue to monitor the athlete for 24-72 hours after the incident, in case symptoms appear or worsen.

If an athlete **has** been diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the athlete must proceed through Dive Ontario's return-to-diving steps. The athlete, or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age, must provide medical documentation (completed *Dive Ontario Medical Assessment form*) of the diagnosis to the Club Designated Person.

2. Share Medical Advice

An athlete, or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age, must share any medical advice or recommendations they receive with their Club Designated Person, before being permitted to return to training, practice, or competition through the return-to-diving steps. If the athlete receives any additional medical advice or recommendations throughout the return-to-diving steps, it must be shared with their Club Designated Person.



3. Disclosing Diagnosis

The Club Designated Person must inform the athlete or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age, of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sport organization with which the athlete is registered and the school the athlete attends.

Students in elementary and secondary school with a diagnosed concussion must follow their school board's return-to-school plan, which supports a student's gradual return to learning and return to physical activity. Athletes should contact their school for more information. Returning to school comes before returning to unrestricted sport.

4. Return-to-Sport Steps

It is important to note that typical recovery times vary from person to person, and that some individuals may require more time to progress through the return-to-sport steps.

An athlete is typically ready to progress to the next step when they can do the activities at their current step without new or worsening symptoms. If at any step symptoms get worse, they should stop and return to the previous step before trying again. If symptoms do not improve or if the symptoms continue to worsen, the athlete should return to the physician or nurse practitioner.

The "Graduated Return-to-Sports Chart" summarizes the type of activities, goals, and expected duration of each return-to-sports step.



Graduated Return-to-Sports Steps

	Activities	Goal of Step	Duration
STEP 0: Initial rest period	Limit movement and rest	Rest the body and mind	At least 24 hours
STEP 1: Symptom-limiting activities	Daily activities that don't make symptoms worse, such as moving around the home and simple chores	Gradual reintroduction of daily school, and work activities	At least 24 hours
STEP 2: Light aerobic activity	Light activities such as walking or stationary bicycle at slow to medium pace for 10 to 15 minutes	Increase heart rate	At least 24 hours
STEP 3: Sport-specific exercise	Individual physical activity such as running or skating No contact or head impact activities	Add movement	At least 24 hours
STEP 4: Non-contact training, practice drills	Harder training drills Add resistance training (if appropriate)	Exercise, coordination and increased thinking	At least 24 hours
Obtain clearance from a physician or nurse practitioner before proceeding to unrestricted training and practice (Steps 5 and 6)			
STEP 5: Unrestricted Training & Practice	Unrestricted training and practice-with contact where applicable	Restore confidence and assess functional skills	At least 24 hours
STEP 6: Return-to-Sport	Unrestricted competition		

The “Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Steps” outlines the diving specific activities divers will complete at each step.

To track the progress of the athlete through each step, the athlete, or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age, will complete *Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Tracker*. This tracker will be reviewed by the Club Designated Person to ensure the athlete is progressing safely.

Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Steps

STEP	Physical Preparation	Dryland	Dry Board & Trampoline	Pool Deck & in the Water	1 Meter	3 Meters	Tower	Training Length
0	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretching 						
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking Stationary bike 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretching/core exercises Simulations (no jump) 						
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming (low intensity 20mins) Muscle training (low intensity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Armstand Jumps Vestibular stimulation (twists on the floor, rolls) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry board: 100/200 hurdle approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No hurdle jumps Standing jumps Front fall in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No hurdle jumps Front/back fall in 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 mins training session max
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up (out of water) Progress muscle training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Armstand (done repeatedly) Continuous jumps without rest More complex vestibular/coordination exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry board: 100 with multiple bounce Trampoline: continuous jumps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head down in deep water Front/back fall in 101-201-301-401 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 102-202-302-402 103-203-303-403 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 101-201-301-401 103-203-303-403 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 101-201-301-401 3m/5m 101-201-301-401 7m Front/back fall 10m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1h training session max
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up (out of water) Normal muscle training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dryland repetitive twists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 102-202-302-402 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5101-5201 510X-520X 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10X-20X-30X-40X 5122-5221-5321 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5132-5231-5331 10X-20X-30X-40X 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61X-62X 3m/5m 10X-20X-30X-40X 5m/7m 10X-20X-30X-40X 7m/10m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1h 30mins training session max
6	Unrestricted diving	Unrestricted diving	Unrestricted diving	Unrestricted diving	Unrestricted diving	Unrestricted diving	Unrestricted diving	Regular Schedule

X's give coaches flexibility to adjust the number of twists a diver needs to do in that stage, according to their skill level



5. Medical Clearance

The athlete, or the athlete's parent or guardian must provide their Club Designated Person with confirmation of medical clearance (use *Dive Ontario Medical Clearance Letter*) by a physician or nurse practitioner before the athlete is permitted to move on to unrestricted training, practice, or competition (Steps 5 and 6).

6. Record Progression

The Club Designated Person must keep a record of the athlete's progression through the return-to-diving steps until the athlete, or the athlete's parent or guardian, has provided a confirmation of medical clearance by a physician or nurse practitioner to the Club Designated Person. The Club Designated Person will review the athlete's *Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Tracker* (filled out by the athlete and their parents) to track the athlete's progress.

Upon the successful completion of Step 5, a completed *Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Tracker* must be sent to the Club Designated Person before the athlete is permitted to proceed to Step 6. Athletes should not progress to Step 6 until the athlete has regained their pre-injury skill-level and the athlete is confident in their ability to return to diving.

Each diving club must limit the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information to that which is reasonably necessary for the purpose of carrying out Dive Ontario's concussion protocols, and to limit access to such personal information to only those individuals who require it for the purpose of fulfilling their duties or obligations under this policy. Personal information collected under this protocol shall be retained, disclosed, and disposed of in a secure manner and in accordance with the Dive Ontario's privacy policy.



Return-to-Sport Protocol Summary

STEP 1 (CONFIRMATION): Athlete has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner. Was a concussion diagnosis received at medical or emergency appointment?

Athlete or parent/guardian sends medical documentation (*Dive Ontario Medical Assessment Form*) of concussion diagnosis to Club Designated Person

Yes

No

Athlete or parent/guardian sends medical documentation (*Dive Ontario Medical Assessment Form*) of medical clearance to Club Designated Person.

STEP 2 (MEDICAL ADVICE): Athlete or parent/guardian must share any medical advice or recommendations they receive (now or throughout the return-to-sports steps) with Club Designated Person

Parent/guardian or emergency contact monitors athlete for 24-72 hours in case symptoms appear or worsen.

Return to Diving

STEP 3 (DISCLOSING DIAGNOSIS): Club Designated Person informs the athlete or parent/guardian of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sports the athlete is registered with and the school the athlete attends. Students in elementary and secondary school must follow their school board's return-to-school plan.

STEP 4 (RETURN-TO-SPORT STEPS): Athlete progresses through *Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Steps*. Athlete moves onto next step when they can do activities at their current step without new or worsening symptoms. If at any step symptoms get worse, they should stop and return to previous step. To track the athlete's progress, the athlete and their parent/guardian will complete *Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Tracker*.

Step 0: Initial rest period
(at least 24 hours)

Step 1: Symptom limiting activities
(at least 24 hours)

Step 2: Light aerobic activity
(at least 24 hours)

Step 3: Sport-specific exercise
(at least 24 hours)

Step 4: Non-contact training/practice drills
(at least 24 hours)

STEP 5 (MEDICAL CLEARANCE): Athlete or parent/guardian provides Club Designated Person confirmation of medical clearance (*Dive Ontario Medical Clearance Form*) from a physician or nurse practitioner

Step 5: Unrestricted training & practice
(at least 24 hours)

STEP 6 (RECORD): Club Designated Person receives completed *Dive Ontario Return-to-Diving Tracker* from athlete or parent/guardian.

Step 6: Return to Diving
(unrestricted)

Step 5: Unrestricted training & practice (at least 24 hours after medical clearance)

- **Physical Preparation:** Warm up (out of water), Normal muscle training
- **Dryland:** Dryland repetitive twists
- **Dry Board & Trampoline:** 102-202-302-402
- **Pool Deck & in the Water:** 5101-5201, 510X-520X
- **1 Meter:** 10X-20X-30X-40X, 5122-5221-5321
- **3 Meters:** 5132-5231-5331, 10X-20X-30X-40X
- **Tower:** 61X-62X 3m/5m, 10X-20X-30X-40X 5m/7m, 10X-20X-30X-40X 7m/10m
- **Training Length:** 1h 30mins training session max

Step 5: Signature of completion

I confirm that _____ completed Stage 5 for a minimum of 24 hours with no symptoms on _____
MM/DD/YY

(Player Signature)

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

Step 6: Return-to-Dive

- Athletes must spend **a minimum of 24 hours at each stage**, however most children/youth should spend longer.
- Required signatures must be completed before moving to the next stage. If the player experiences any onset or worsening of symptoms during or after the activities in any stage, the player should stop that activity immediately and return to the previous successful stage the following day before trying those activities again.
- Medical clearance is required for participation in Stage 5 and 6. Clearance must be from a physician or nurse practitioner. See *Dive Ontario Medical Clearance Form*, this medical clearance form from a physician or nurse practitioner must be sent to the Club Designated Person before the athlete is permitted to proceed to Stage 5.
- Do not progress to Stage 6 until player has regained their pre-injury skill-level and the athlete is confident in their ability to return to diving.



Medical Clearance Form

Name of Athlete: _____ Date: _____

To whom it may concern,

Athletes who are diagnosed with a concussion should be managed according to the Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport. Accordingly, the above athlete has been medically cleared to participate in the following activities as tolerated effective the date stated above (please check all that apply):

- Symptom-limiting activity (cognitive and physical activities that don't provoke symptoms)
- Light aerobic activity (Walking or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training)
- Sport-specific exercise (Running or swimming drills. No head impact activities)
- Non-contact practice (Harder training drills, e.g. diving drills. May start progressive resistance training. Including gym class activities without a risk of contact, e.g. tennis, running, swimming)
- Full-contact practice (diving from boards, including gym class activities with risk of contact and head impact, e.g. soccer, dodgeball, basketball)
- Full game play

What if symptoms recur? Any athlete who has been cleared for physical activities, gym class or non-contact practice, and who has a recurrence of symptoms, should immediately remove himself or herself from the activity and inform the teacher or coach. If the symptoms subside, the athlete may continue to participate in these activities as tolerated.

Athletes who have been cleared for full contact practice or game play must be able to participate in full-time school (or normal cognitive activity) as well as high intensity resistance and endurance exercise (including non-contact practice) without symptom recurrence. Any athlete who has been cleared for full-contact practice or full game play and has a recurrence of symptoms, should immediately remove himself or herself from play, inform their teacher or coach, and undergo Medical Assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to full-contact practice or games.

Any athlete who returns to practices or games and sustains a new suspected concussion should be managed according to the *Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport*.

Other Comments:

Thank-you very much in advance for your understanding.

Signature/print _____ M.D. / N.P. (circle appropriate designation)*

**In rural or northern regions, the Medical Assessment Letter may be completed by a nurse with pre-arranged access to a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. Forms completed by other licensed healthcare professionals should not otherwise be accepted.*