

Go Back to Play After a Concussion

Your provider has said it's safe for you to go back to your sport. The Tennessee Sports Concussion Law says you must follow a 5-day process before you can play again. This guide tells you what you can do each day and what to do if you have any symptoms.

You must also be back in the classroom without the need for any special help before you return to your sport.



How does the process work?

You'll start with very light exercise and add harder things each day.

- **Day 1:** light aerobic exercise
- **Day 2:** moderate exercise that includes head and neck movement
- **Day 3:** heavy, non-contact activity and exercises related to your sport
- **Day 4:** non-contact practice
- **Day 5:** full-contact drills or practice
- **Day 6:** go back to full competition

You'll also rate your symptoms before and after each day's activity.

If you have **any** symptoms before, during, or after a day's activity, you must rest for 24 hours and then do that step again.

Call us if you have any questions

- Vanderbilt Sports Concussion Center
615-936-7846
- Vanderbilt Youth Sports Health Center
615-421-8900

If you have symptoms that won't go away, call your provider right away.

Day 1: Light aerobic activity

You may do 15 minutes of light jogging or light exercise on an exercise bike.

Rate your symptoms before you work out.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Rate your symptoms after you work out.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Did you have any symptoms during day 1?

- Yes: rest for 24 hours and do this day again.
- No: move on to day 2 tomorrow.

Notes: _____

Day 2: Moderate activity

You may do moderate activities that include head and neck movement. Warm up with light jogging or light exercise on a stationary bike.

Then you can do more exercises like:

- sit-ups
- push-ups

- burpees
- sprints

This workout should last about 30 minutes.

Rate your symptoms before you work out.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Rate your symptoms after you work out.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Did you have any symptoms during day 2?

Yes: rest for 24 hours and do this day again.

No: move on to day 3 tomorrow.

Notes: _____

Day 3: Heavy, non-contact activity

You may now take part in non-contact drills and things that are related to your sport. You may also include sprints, running, or your regular weightlifting routine. Here's a list of things you can do for each sport:

Sport	Starting exercises	Advanced exercises
Baseball	Jogging poles, short tosses (60 to 90 feet), ground balls and defense work, swings off batting tee	Baserunning, position drills (catcher, infield, outfield), front toss or side in cages
Basketball	Court agilities, dribbling drills, lateral shuffle, passing drills, stationary shooting	Court sprints, offense and defense drills, shooting drills, post drills
Football	Stance starts, pass routes, run routes	Run blocking and rushing with dummies, pass blocking and rushing with dummies
Gymnastics	Leaps, approach only for vault, beam, bars, and rings	Standing tumbling. If that feels OK, then running tumbling
Hockey	Passing drills, stick work with footwork, defense drills	Play routines with stick, cone work with stop and start
Lacrosse	Field running drills, stick work with footwork, wall ball catch	Play routes with stick, passing drills, offense and defense drills
Soccer	Field running and agility drills, ball footwork, passing drills, short headers, dynamic run passing	Run plays and shooting, long headers, offense and defense drills. Goalies: lay down dive stops, kneeling dives, shuffle catches, standing dives
Softball	Jogging poles, short tosses, ground balls and defense work, swings off batting tee	Baserunning, position drills (catcher, infield, outfield), front toss or side in cages
Tennis	On-court agility, footwork drills, sprints to net for volley, ball machine	Service returns, point play with all strokes and serve
Volleyball	On-court agility, footwork drills, shadow block and approaches, passing drills, setting against the wall	Blocking and hitting drills with ball, jump serving, setting to target
Wrestling	Alternate direction mat jogs, wall through stand drills, shadow drills	Drills for takedowns, escapes, carries, and sweeps; explosive stand-up drill with partner low resistance, fast-paced shadow drills

Rate your symptoms before you work out.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Rate your symptoms after you work out.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Did you have any symptoms during day 3?

- Yes: rest for 24 hours and do this day again.
- No: move on to day 4 tomorrow.

Notes: _____

Day 4: Non-contact practice

You may take part in a full, non-contact practice related to your sport.

Rate your symptoms before practice.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Rate your symptoms after practice.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Did you have any symptoms during day 4?

Yes: rest for 24 hours and do this day again.

No: move on to day 5 tomorrow.

Notes: _____

Day 5: Full-contact in controlled drill or practice

You must be able to get through a full-contact practice before you can play in a live game.

Rate your symptoms before practice.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Rate your symptoms after practice.

Symptoms	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe			
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pressure in your head	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Throw up or feel sick to your stomach	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel dizzy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurry vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitive to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel like you're in a fog	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Don't feel right	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to concentrate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to remember things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Very tired or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel confused	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sleepy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get upset more than normal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Get annoyed easily	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feel nervous or anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard to fall asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Did you have any symptoms during day 5?

- Yes: rest for 24 hours and do this day again.
- No: go back to full competition.

Notes: _____
