



Return to Play Protocol Policy

Concussion:

Each stage must be separated by at least 24 hours and the athlete must be completely symptom-free at each stage prior to progressing to the next stage. If symptoms are experienced at any stage, the athlete is to drop back to the previous stage for a period of 24 hours and be symptom-free at that stage prior to attempting the next stage again. Any stage below marked with ** indicates that this stage must be completed under the supervision of a CCMI trained practitioner.

Stage 1 – Symptom limited rest **

Once the athlete has received a diagnosis of concussion from a trained CCMI practitioner, the first step is symptom limited cognitive and physical rest. At this stage, it is important that the athlete not engage in any physical or cognitive activity that may provoke symptoms or increase the risk of a secondary injury.

Stage 2 – Light ‘Cognitive’ Activity

“Cognitive” means mental. At this stage, the athlete should begin incorporating short periods of light reading, homework, TV viewing, etc. If the athlete can tolerate 1 hour of light cognitive activity without increasing symptoms, progress to stage 3 the following day.

Stage 3 – Half-Day of School with Modifications

The athlete is now permitted to attend a half-day of school with modifications. Typical modifications include but are not limited to: No tests, No gym, No homework, No music class, Frequent breaks etc. If the athlete can complete a half-day of school without increasing symptoms, progress to stage 4 the following day.

Stage 4 – Full Day of School with Modifications

The athlete is now permitted to attend a full day of school. If the athlete can complete a full day of school without increasing symptoms, progress to stage 5 the following day.

Stage 5 – Light Physical Activity **

This stage incorporates the addition of light physical exertion to see how your brain responds to an increased demand for blood flow. You will need to book an appointment with a CCMI practitioner to complete this stage. Dress in athletic attire and be required to complete 20-30 minutes of clinician supervised physical activity while your heart rate and blood flow are monitored.



Stage 6 – Non-Contact Practice

Phase I (Low Intensity) The athlete is now permitted to return to sport specific activity with the team in a NON-CONTACT format and administered by a coach/trainer. The athlete will be asked to complete various simple “sport-specific” drills that do not involve contact or the chance of contact. These drills will be individually based and will involve fairly low physical stress. A list of suggested drills for every sport can be found in the concussion tracker app by selecting Profile Team the athlete in question select a sport from the dropdown menus to view drills.

Stage 7 – Non-Contact Practice – Phase II (Higher Intensity)

This stage will once again be administered by your coach and/or trainer. The athlete is now permitted to take place in ‘dryland’ training and weight training. Sport-specific drills can now be conducted at higher intensity and be more team-based (3-man weave, breakouts, etc.). At this stage, athletes are still NOT permitted to participate in any drills that involve contact or that have the chance for potential contact.

Stage 8 – Blackhawks Protocol and Re-Testing of Baseline **

This stage will require you book an appointment with a trained CCMI practitioner. The Blackhawks protocol is an intensive physical exertion protocol that challenges the athlete’s cardiovascular system as well as their balance (vestibular system) and assesses their readiness to return to full athletic competition. Upon successful completion of the Blackhawks program, the athlete will immediately undergo full re-testing of all baseline parameters to assess every area of neurological function to determine if the athlete has reached full brain recovery.

Stage 9 – Full Practice

Upon successful completion of stage 8, it is strongly encouraged that you participate in at least 1 practice at full intensity, including contact drills, prior to participating in a game.

Stage 10 – Full Game

Play Milton Magic FC (MYSC) has formed a collaborative partnership with Complete Concussion Management Inc. because they are the leaders in concussion management for amateur and professional sports associations across Canada. All protocols and stages are based on the most current scientific research and this policy has been enacted to help keep our athletes safe. This policy is subject to revisions as new research emerges.



Vacation:

- If a player misses one full week of training due to vacation, they will not be eligible for match minutes upon their return until they have completed at least one full week of training.

Illness:

- If a player is absent for one week due to sickness, they must return to training and complete a full week before being considered for match minutes.

Injury:

- Any injury resulting in an absence longer than one week will require a doctor's note before the player may return to training or match play. This requirement is in place to protect both the player and the club.

In rare or exceptional circumstances, depending on the reason for the absence, a gradual reintegration may be considered. If a player completes a minimum of two training sessions and is deemed physically ready, the coach may allow limited but meaningful minutes. This remains at the coach's discretion, particularly when the player is a significant contributor to the team, while still prioritizing fairness, consistency, and player safety.

In all cases, the final decision regarding a player's return to play rests with the coach and will be based on the player's physical readiness and ability to compete, considering the severity of the illness, injury, or absence.

The objective of these guidelines is to ensure consistent standards and clear communication across all teams.