ATC TIP

RETURN TO LEARN

CONCUSSION RECOVERY

When a student athlete sustains a concussion, many times the thought of having to miss a test or falling behind on homework assignments, can cause their stress level to increase. Due to the fear of falling behind or performing poorly on their schoolwork, they may try to grind it out despite headaches, difficulty concentrating, etc. When this occurs, a majority of student athletes will experience an increase intensity of concussion symptoms thus slowing the recovery time. In an effort to help student athletes avoid a prolonged recovery from concussion, many schools are adopting a "Return to Learn" progression.

HOW IT WORKS

Return to Learn helps ensure that all appropriate school administrators, teachers, front office staff, coaches, and medical personnel are notified of the students' injury. This helps enhance monitoring of any deteriorating symptoms and allows proper academic accommodations to be considered, such as, having the student remain at home for 1-2 days and consider half-days when returning to school. Other accommodations may include:

- Increased time on tests and quizzes or postponing them until symptoms improve
- Eating lunch in a quieter environment
- Limiting computer screen time,
- Breaking up homework/reading assignments into 20-30 minute increments

When the student is able to return to school without any increase in symptoms, full school days may resume and the student can begin increased exposure to environmental stimuli and making up assignments.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY:

As you can see, in order for a Return to Learn progression to be effective in assisting with the student athletes' recovery, all school personnel, coaches, parents, and student athlete need to be on the same page. Communication is key but when everyone works together, the recovery process can be less stressful.

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