



ERGS RUGBY

Concussion Policy



What is Concussion?

Sports related concussion is a traumatic brain injury that is caused by a direct force to the head or a force elsewhere in the body which is transmitted to the head. Whilst rare, concussion results in temporary impairment of brain function. However, in some cases, signs and symptoms evolve over a number of minutes to hours.

What causes concussion?

Concussion can be caused by a blow to the head or from a whiplash movement of the head and neck that can occur when a player is tackled, collides with another player or the ground.

Concussion Facts:

- You do not have to lose consciousness to suffer from a concussion.
- The effects of concussion cannot be seen on standard x-ray, CT scan or MRI.
- The onset of the effects of concussion may be delayed for up to 24–48 hours.
- Symptoms generally resolve over a period of days but in some cases can be prolonged.

Recognise & Remove

If, at any point during a match or training, a player is concussed or has a suspected concussion, that player must be immediately and permanently removed from the field of play.

IRFU – Guide to Concussion

<https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/21121434/IRFU-Guide-to-Concussion-Wallet-Card.pdf>

RESPONSIBILITIES / CHECKLISTS

Coach:

- If player suffers suspected concussion remove the player safely.
- Hand the player over to a responsible adult to observe during game.
- Parents/guardians of underage players should be informed as soon as possible that the player has suffered from a suspected concussion and they should be advised that the child should not partake in any sport until they have completed the GRTP.
- Fill out injury report: www.irishrugby.ie/playingthegame/medical.php
- Guide player through active phase of GRTP.

Parent:

- Get full details of event if you were not present.
- Make safe arrangements for your son/daughter to get home after the match or training
- Observe the player over the next 24-48 hours and if symptoms worsen contact your GP.
- Ensure the player does not drink alcohol or drive.
- Ensure player does not return to play before completing the GRTP protocol.
- The player should be medically assessed.
- Complete physical rest is no longer encouraged and actually may delay recover.
- Inform school and other sports that your child has suffered from a concussion and will enter GRTP.
- Ensure you child does not participate in any sport and strictly follows GRTP.
- Ensure that player honestly reports any ongoing symptoms.

Graduated Return to Play Protocol (GRTP)

Day	GRTP Protocol	Date
Day 0 (Day of injury)	Recognise and Remove	
Day 0-2	Stage 1 – Symptom Limited Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early light physical and mental activity helps treat symptoms • Avoid STRICT absolute physical and mental rest – this delays recovery • Avoid HIGH intensity exercise in first 48 hours 	
Day 2-6	Stage 2 – Aerobic Exercise Light to moderate activity recommended such as jogging and bodyweight exercises and change of direction exercises	
Day 7-9	Stage 3 – Rugby Specific Exercise Continue with light to moderate activity recommended such as running, gym work with reduced load and change of direction exercises	
Player MUST be symptom-free before entering Stage 4		
Day 10-15	Stage 4 – Non-contact Drills Intense aerobic exercise with moderate resistance work in gym encouraged. Can begin to work on non-contact tackle technique.	
Day 16-23	Stage 5 – Full Contact Practice Full training in regards to pitch sessions and gym sessions. Contact can be progressed with extra pad/shield work as well as wrestling.	
Day 23	Stage 6 – Return to Play	

IRFU – Guide to Return to Play Protocol

<https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/21121430/IRFU-Graduated-Return-To-Play-Wallet-Card.pdf>