

## DOs and DON'Ts for Recovery



### It is OK to:

- Use Tylenol for headaches
- Use ice packs as needed for comfort
- Eat and sleep as usual - hydration and a good night's sleep are the best medicine for recovery
- Resume most activities with modifications, except for driving and contact sports
- Use screens, but take breaks BEFORE symptoms worsen

### There is NO need to:

- Check eyes with a flashlight
- Wake up every hour
- Test reflexes
- Stay in bed
- Remove TV, cell phones, computer
- Stay home more than 1-2 days
- Provide a special diet, but do drink plenty of water and monitor caffeine if sleep is disrupted



### Do NOT:

- Drink alcohol or drive while symptomatic
- Exercise to increase HR or lift weights
- Return to any sport with risk of contact until cleared by trained health care provider
- Take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), aspirin, naproxen or nonsteroid anti-inflammatory medications until told it's OK by a physician
- Drive until medically cleared

## Our Services

- Physical, musculoskeletal and neuropsychological evaluation
- Vestibular therapy and cognitive-behavior therapy for pain, stress management, injury resilience and sleep
- Personalized return-to-learn and return-to-work care plans
- Personalized return-to-play plan
- Advanced neurovestibular, cervical, oculomotor and exertional rehabilitation
- Daily living activity rehabilitation
- Baseline testing
- Coordination of care with school, employer, team, athletic trainer, related professionals, and primary care provider
- Consultation and education to teams, organizations, health care and educational professionals

## Our Care Team

The Concussion Center utilizes an interdisciplinary team approach to concussion care and treatment.

- Shawn Spooner, MD, FAAFP
- Marc Molis, MD, FAAFP
- Marla Shapiro, PhD, HSP, NCSP
- Angela Bahr, DPT
- Lee Cody, DPT
- Kamela Kleppe Yeager, MS, CCC-SLP
- Troy Kleese, LAT, ATC

### Sports Medicine and Concussion Center

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To learn more about our concussion services,  
please visit [unitypoint.org/concussion](http://unitypoint.org/concussion).



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## UnityPoint Clinic® Concussion Center



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# RECOVERY ROADMAP

Iowa concussion law requires complete Return to Learn prior to beginning the Return to Play process required for medical clearance for unrestricted return to sports.



## Diagnosis

### Risk Factors and Detours to Concussion Center

- Pre-injury history of anxiety, depression, learning or attention problems.
- Personal or family headache history.
- Persistent headache.
- Symptoms not improving in 1-2 weeks after diagnosis.
- Worsening of symptoms.
- Recovery not complete by 3-4 weeks.
- Histories of eye-tracking difficulties, vertigo, prior concussions.

1

...gradually resume return to learn/work...  
...gradually resume light physical activity...

### Checkpoint 1

within first 72 hours of diagnosis

Watch for red flags

**RED FLAGS:** Call your doctor or go to the Emergency Department with sudden onset of any of the following within the first 24-72 hours.

Headaches that worsen	Look very drowsy, can't be awakened	Unusual behavior change
Seizures	Can't recognize people or places	Significant irritability
Slurred speech	Increasing confusion	Repeated vomiting
Neck pain	Weakness or numbness in arms or legs	Loss of consciousness

2

### Checkpoint 2

around 7-10 days

Symptoms not improving, detour to Concussion Center

...gradually resume light physical activity...

...gradually resume return to learn/work...

3

### Checkpoint 3

3-4 weeks

Progress has stalled and recovery not complete, detour to Concussion Center

### RTL: Return to Learn

RTL is complete when students are 100% symptom free and back to full, regular course load with no adjustments.



### RTP: Return to Play

- RTP completed
- Gradual, stepwise increase in intensity and length of exercise without symptoms
- Prior to full return to sports, recess or PE
- Cleared by medical professional



Every concussion is unique, and recovery is different for everyone.

Most people recover fully within 2 to 4 weeks, with longer recoveries for individuals with certain risk factors. At the Concussion Center, our interdisciplinary team of experts work together to develop a personalized treatment plan to facilitate your return to school, work and play as quickly and as safely as possible, providing the highest level of up-to-date and evidence-based care.

### What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body. The jostling of the brain disrupts the brain's metabolic functioning, creating an energy crisis requiring time to resolve. Overtaxing the brain during recovery contributes to the hallmark symptoms of concussion. These symptoms should resolve over time with proper injury management. Full recovery is expected within 2 to 4 weeks for most children, adolescents and adults.

### Symptoms

Symptoms may appear right away or within a few hours or days, and are often more subtle than losing consciousness. Typical symptoms include any of the following:

