

STRENGTH IN PAIN AFTER A CONCUSSION

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO RECOVERY

Most people recover well from a concussion—but recovery starts with knowing what to do.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even if a CT scan is normal, a concussion can still affect how your brain functions.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU:



Recognize symptoms



Know when to seek emergency care



Support your recovery every step of the way



STRENGTH.

You are not alone.



RECOVERY.

One step at a time.



HOPE.

Better days ahead.

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COMMON CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS



Symptoms may appear immediately or develop over the next several hours or days.



PHYSICAL

- Headache
- Pressure feeling inside the head
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Blurred or double vision
- Fatigue



COGNITIVE

- Brain fog
- Difficulty concentrating
- Memory problems
- Slower thinking
- Feeling mentally "off"



EMOTIONAL

- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Mood swings
- Increased frustration

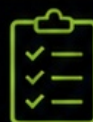


SLEEP

- Sleeping more than usual
- Trouble falling asleep
- Trouble staying asleep
- Feeling unusually tired



Not everyone experiences all of these symptoms. Symptoms can vary in type, severity, and duration.



Listen to your body.
When in doubt, get checked out.



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GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE:

A concussion can occasionally become a life-threatening brain injury.



Loss of consciousness lasting more than a minute



Repeated vomiting



Worsening headache



Increasing confusion



Seizures



Weakness or numbness



Difficulty speaking



Unequal pupil size



Difficulty waking up



Clear fluid draining from the nose or ears



Persistent drowsiness



One-sided weakness



CALL 911
IF ANY OF THESE
SYMPTOMS DEVELOP.

Early action can save a life
and prevent further injury.



When in doubt,
GET CHECKED OUT.



CT scans can be normal.
A concussion can still be serious.



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THE FIRST 24–48 HOURS

THE FIRST TWO DAYS ARE IMPORTANT.

Rest your brain and body, avoid activities that can make symptoms worse, and follow your healthcare provider's instructions.



DO



Rest your brain and body.



Stay hydrated.



Eat nutritious meals.



Sleep as needed.



Have someone monitor you.



Follow your healthcare provider's instructions.



LIMIT



Intense exercise



Alcohol



Recreational drugs



Activities with another risk of head injury



Long periods of screen time if symptoms worsen

RETURNING TO ACTIVITY

RECOVERY SHOULD HAPPEN GRADUALLY.

Increase activity only if symptoms remain mild or continue improving.

1



DAILY LIGHT ACTIVITIES

Return to normal daily routines that do not worsen symptoms.

2



LIGHT ACTIVITY

Light walking or stationary bike. No heavy lifting or intense workouts.

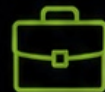
3



MODERATE EXERCISE

Increase heart rate with more activity. No contact or high risk.

4



RETURN TO WORK / SCHOOL

Resume normal activities with accommodations if needed.

5



FULL ACTIVITY

Return to sports or high-risk activities only after full recovery and medical clearance when appropriate.



If symptoms worsen at any step,
GO BACK AND REST.



Complete bed rest is usually unnecessary.
Light activity that does not worsen symptoms is often appropriate after the first day or two.



Every concussion is different.
Be patient, listen to your body,
and give your brain time to heal.



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RECOVERY TIMELINE

RECOVERY VARIES FOR EVERY PERSON.

Give your brain the time it needs to heal.



**MANY ADULTS IMPROVE
WITHIN 2–4 WEEKS.**



**CHILDREN AND TEENS
MAY REQUIRE LONGER.**



**SOME PEOPLE
RECOVER IN DAYS.**



**OTHERS EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS
LASTING MONTHS.**



RECOVERY IS NOT ALWAYS LINEAR.

Good days and bad days are common.
Progress may be slow, then speed up.
Be patient with yourself.



FACTORS THAT MAY PROLONG RECOVERY INCLUDE:

- Previous concussions
- Migraine history
- Anxiety or depression
- ADHD or learning disorders
- Sleep disturbances
- More severe initial symptoms
- Lack of rest or overexertion
- High stress levels
- Other medical conditions



Listen to your body. Rushing recovery can
set you back. Real healing takes time.



Celebrate small wins.
Every step forward is
progress.



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FULL ACTIVITY

Return to sports or high-risk activities only after full recovery and medical clearance when appropriate.

THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING RECOVERY:



Recovery timelines are different for everyone.



Get plenty of sleep—rest is when your brain heals.



Eat a balanced, brain-healthy diet and stay hydrated.



Manage stress and avoid multi-tasking.



Lean on your support system. You don't have to do this alone.



If symptoms worsen at any step,
GO BACK AND REST.
is often appropriate after the first day or two.



Listen to your body. Be patient, and give your brain time to heal.



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WHEN SYMPTOMS DON'T GO AWAY

If symptoms continue beyond several weeks, speak with a **healthcare professional** experienced in concussion management.



PERSISTENT SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:



Ongoing headaches



Brain fog or difficulty thinking



Dizziness or balance issues



Vision problems



Sleep disturbances



Fatigue



Anxiety or depression



Sensitivity to light or noise

ADDITIONAL THERAPIES MAY INCLUDE:



VESTIBULAR THERAPY

Helps with dizziness, balance, and movement.



VISION THERAPY

Addresses visual tracking, focus, and eye coordination.



PHYSICAL THERAPY

Improves strength, endurance, and physical function.



COGNITIVE REHABILITATION

Supports memory, attention, and problem-solving.



HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY

Supports brain healing by increasing oxygen delivery and reducing inflammation.



CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY

Gentle, hands-on therapy that helps release tension and support nervous system regulation.



KEY TAKEAWAY:

**EARLY TREATMENT
OFTEN IMPROVES OUTCOMES.**



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YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Healing from a concussion is a journey,
and we're here to walk it with you.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT ALONE.



Reach out to trusted
healthcare professionals.



Connect with others who
understand what you're going
through.



Talk about how you feel.
It's okay to ask for help.



Advocate for yourself.
Your health matters.



Keep hope.
Your brain can heal.

RESOURCES & SUPPORT ARE AVAILABLE:



LEARN MORE

Visit our website for educational
resources and recovery tools.
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GET SUPPORT

Find local support groups and
connect with others.



CONTACT US

We're here to help.
info@strengthinpainfoundation.com



FOLLOW US

Follow us on social media for
inspiration, updates, and tips.
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BE PROUD OF EVERY STEP FORWARD.
RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE.
HOPE IS REAL.



Your journey matters.
Your progress matters.
YOU MATTER.



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