



Edmonton Ringette

Player Return to Play Guideline

Edmonton Ringette has implemented player injury guidelines that **all teams must follow**. Adults making decisions for young athletes must be proactive in identifying injury and ensuring safe return to play, especially from concussion. In order to address this critical issue, Edmonton Ringette has implemented the following guideline that covers actions to be taken when an injury occurs, along with specific protocols that must be followed to ensure the player's safe return to play.

Our players' wellbeing is the primary focus of this guideline and as such it is mandatory that every team official (Coach/ Manager) review and understand it. The purpose of this guideline is to ensure our athletes are not put into game situations before they have fully recovered from an injury.

Attached is the "Return to Play Form" (RTP) that must be used when an athlete returns from injury or concussion. This form contains specific instructions that must be followed before an athlete is allowed return to play. The form must be completed by a health care provider for any athlete that has been removed from play due to injury. The RTP form must be signed by the athlete's parent/guardian consenting to the health care provider's recommendations. A copy of this form must be retained by the coach/manager with a copy to the Registrar of Edmonton Ringette.



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Return to Play Form

This information is strictly confidential and will only be used to assist in the injured player's safe return to play.

Player Name	
Date of Injury	
Primary Complaint	
Diagnosis	

The following are considerations/restrictions with respect to return to play:

Name of Treating Healthcare Professional Signature Phone Number Date

A concussion is a serious event, but you can recover fully from such an injury if the brain is given enough time to rest and recuperate. Returning to normal activities, including sport participation, is a step-wise process that requires patience, attention, and caution.

STEP 1: NO ACTIVITY, ONLY COMPLETE REST.

Limit school, work and tasks requiring concentration. Refrain from physical activity until symptoms are gone. Once symptoms are gone, a physician, preferably one with experience managing concussions, should be consulted before beginning a step wise return to play process.

STEP 2: LIGHT AEROBIC EXERCISE.

Activities such as walking or stationary cycling. The player should be supervised by someone who can help monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting. The duration and intensity of the aerobic exercise can be gradually increased over time if no symptoms or signs return during the exercise or the next day.

SYMPTOMS? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved.
If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? Proceed to **Step 3** the next day.

STEP 3: SPORT SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES.

Activities such as skating or throwing can begin at step 3. There should be no body contact or other jarring motions such as high speed stops or hitting a baseball with a bat.

SYMPTOMS? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved.
If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? Proceed to **Step 4** the next day.

STEP 4: BEGIN DRILLS WITHOUT BODY CONTACT.

SYMPTOMS? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved.
If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? The time needed to progress from non-contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and with the player. **Proceed to Step 5 only after medical clearance.**

STEP 5: BEGIN DRILLS WITH BODY CONTACT.

SYMPTOMS? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved.
If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

NO SYMPTOMS? Proceed to **Step 6** the next day.

STEP 6: GAME PLAY.

NEVER RETURN TO PLAY IF YOU STILL HAVE SYMPTOMS!

A player who returns to active play before full recovery from the first concussion is at high risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be increased and prolonged.

HOW LONG DOES THIS PROCESS TAKE?

These steps do not correspond to days! It may take many days to progress through one step, especially if the concussion is severe. As soon as symptoms appear, the player should return to rest until symptoms have resolved and wait at least one more day before attempting any activity. The only way to heal a brain is to rest it.

HOW DO I FIND THE RIGHT DOCTOR?

When dealing with concussions, it is important to see a doctor who is knowledgeable in concussion management. This might include your physician or someone such as a sports medicine specialist. Your family doctor maybe required to submit a referral to see a specialist. Contact the Canadian Academy of Sport and Exercise Medicine (CASEM) to find a sports medical physician in your area. Visit www.casm-acms.org for more information. You can also refer your doctor to the concussion pages of thinkfirst.ca for more information.

WHO DO THESE GUIDELINES APPLY TO?

These guidelines were developed for children over the age of 10; those younger may require special guidelines, and more conservative treatment and care. Return to Play Guidelines should be at the discretion of the physician.

WHAT IF MY SYMPTOMS RETURN DURING THIS PROCESS?

Sometimes these steps can cause symptoms of a concussion to return. This means that the brain has not yet healed, and needs more rest. If any signs or symptoms return during the Return To Play process, they should stop the activity and rest until symptoms have resolved. The player must be re-evaluated by a physician before trying any activity again. Remember, symptoms may return later that day or the next, not necessarily during the activity!