



# RETURN-TO-SCHOOL/WORK STRATEGY

The following is an outline of the Return-to-School Strategy that should be used to help student-athletes, parents/caregivers and teachers to collaborate in allowing the player to make a gradual return to school activities. Depending on the severity and type of the symptoms present, student-athletes will progress through the following stages at different rates. This tool is a recommendation and should not replace medical advice.

Medical clearance is not required to return to school, except for full participation in school-based sport and physical activity. Return to sport and physical activity should be guided by the Return-to-Sport Strategy.

Students do not need to be symptom-free to return to school and complete absence from school for more than one week is not recommended. It is common for a student's symptoms to worsen slightly with activity. This is acceptable as they progress through steps so long as the symptom exacerbation is:

- mild: Symptoms worsen by only one to two points on a zero-to-10 scale, and
- brief: Symptoms settle back down to pre-activity levels within an hour.

If the student's symptoms worsen more than this, they should pause and adapt activities as needed.

Players should also be encouraged to ask their school if they have a school-specific Return-to-Learn Program in place to help student-athletes make a gradual return to school.

## REST (24 - 48 HOURS)

### Activities of daily living and relative rest

Typical activities at home (e.g., preparing meals, social interactions, light walking) that do not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms. Minimize screen time.

#### GOAL OF THE STEP:

Gradual return to typical activities

**2**

**School activities with encouragement to return to school (as tolerated)**

Homework, reading or other cognitive activities at school or at home. Take breaks and adapt activities if they result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms. Gradually resume screen time.

**GOAL OF THE STEP:**  
Increase tolerance to cognitive work and connect socially with peers

**3**

**Part-time or full days at school with accommodations (as needed)**

Gradual introduction of schoolwork. May need to start with a partial school day or with increased breaks during the day.

**GOAL OF THE STEP:**  
Increase academic activities

**4**

**Return-to-school full-time**

Return to full days at school and academic activities, without accommodations related to the concussion

**GOAL OF THE STEP:**  
Return to full academic activities

**What is next?**

**RETURN TO SCHOOL IS COMPLETE**

*\*Note: It is important that youth and adult student-athletes return to full-time school/work activities before progressing to step 4 of the Water Polo Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy!*

**\*Note:** These steps can also be used as a Return-to-Work Strategy\*\* for those water polo players that train or compete in the Active for Life stages (i.e. Masters water polo, adult provincial League or club adult water polo program) or for coaches, officials and trainers.

\*\*A more tailored and detailed Return-to-Work strategy is available for stakeholders on Parachute's website in both of Canada's official languages (English and French).

A visual representation of the WPC Concussion Pathway can be seen in Appendix A.