

Ontario Sailing

Concussions



Removal from Sport Procedures

We are concerned about the long-term health of all our participants. We have instituted a Concussion Management Policy to help protect their health and in compliance with Ontario's Rowan's Law.

The policy is that if any individual suffers any kind of injury where there is potential for there to have been direct or indirect force to the head, neck, face, or upper body AND is experiencing or demonstrating any concussion related signs or symptoms, the individual will be removed from activity immediately.

The designated person to make this decision will be the coach and/or regatta host. In the case of a suspected concussion, the individual may not be in a condition to assess themselves or make appropriate decisions. The decision will be made erring on the side of caution in support of the long-term health of the participant.

For individuals under 18, all suspected concussions or situations that occurred that potentially could result in a concussion will be reported to their guardian. The guardian should monitor the individual for delayed signs and symptoms for the next 72 hours.

All individuals of any age with a suspected concussion should see a medical doctor (or nurse practitioner) for medical assessment and diagnosis.

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.

If diagnosed with a concussion, please turn over for a sailing specific return to sport protocol. Remember that each individual and each concussion is different and individualized medical advice should be followed.

*For more information and Ontario Sailing's full Concussion Policy please go to:
www.ontariosailing.ca/concussion-information/*

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Return to Sailing Protocol



If you are diagnosed with a concussion, follow the stages to return under medical guidance

Each step must take a **minimum of one day** but could last longer, depending on the athlete and their specific situation. A physician, preferably one with concussions expertise, should be consulted before beginning the process to return.

The athlete should spend a minimum of 24 hours at each step before progressing on to the next. It is common for an athlete's symptoms to worsen slightly with activity. This is acceptable as they progress through steps 1 to 4 of return to sport, so long as 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.

Step	Aim	Activity	Goal of each step
1	Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24-48 hours)	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	Gradual re-introduction of typical activities
After a maximum of 24 to 48 hours after injury, progress to Step 2			
2	Light to moderate aerobic activity	Activities such as walking or stationary cycling. The athlete should be supervised by someone who can help monitor for symptoms and signs. The duration and intensity of the aerobic exercise can be gradually increased over time from 55% to 70% of maximum heart rate.	Increase heart rate
If athlete can tolerate moderate aerobic exercise progress to Step 3			
3	Sport-specific exercise	Activities such as light indoor rowing, active yoga, stretching. There should be no jarring motions such as high-speed agility training or jumping. No risk of head impact in activities.	Add more complex movement patterns while increasing intensity
If athlete can tolerate more intense and complex activity, progress to Step 4			
4	Begin drills without body contact / off water	Activities such as boat work, boat rigging and resistance training can begin at this step. May start progressive resistance training.	Exercise, coordination and increased thinking
Medical Clearance -- If the athlete has completed Return to School (if applicable) and has submitted written medical clearance, progress to Step 5.			
5	Return to sport - on water practice	Sailors can return to on water training gradually increasing the challenge of the activity.	Begin engagement in training on water, experiencing gradually challenging situations.
If the athlete can tolerate non-competitive, high-risk activities, progress to Step 6			
6	Competition	Return to sport with normal activities in training and competition.	Engage in training and competition