

## Concussion Recovery & The School Holidays

### Introduction

The school holidays can provide a valuable break from the stresses of school life, and can often be hugely beneficial for concussion recovery.

They can also provide an obstacle to recovery, though. At school you will have the opportunity to partake in organised sport, and your Graduated Return To Play (GRTP) is relatively easy to achieve as a result. In the holidays this isn't necessarily the case. Unless you play organised sports outside of school, you may be limited in your opportunities to build-up your involvement, potentially leading to a delay in returning to unrestricted sport following your concussion.

### What can I do about this?

Your activity will depend on the stage of recovery you are currently on, but you may need to get creative! If you have been advised to undertake low risk, low intensity activities (generally day 8-14) this is potentially easier; running, swimming, static bike, or going to the gym, for instance. If you have been signed back to training and don't have the opportunity to partake in a training session, you should look to increase the intensity of your activities. This might mean more intense running, or a longer swim, or even passing a ball around with some friends.

### What about if I play a club sport?

If you are involved in club sport, you may have more of an opportunity to take part in organised sport. It's still important to follow the advice, though. Club coaches may not know you've sustained a concussion, or be aware of the particular stage of recovery you are in, so it's important to keep them in the loop. It goes without saying that return to competitive sport should be avoided before the day 21 mark at the earliest, and this remains the guidance wherever you are playing your sport.

### If I haven't had the opportunity to play sport is my return to matches going to be delayed?

Our clinicians are aware that school holidays can be tricky, and will always take a pragmatic approach to reviewing injuries.

**Keep to Appointment timelines:** If you are due a follow up appointment you should still book this over the holidays if you are able to; this avoids the rush for reviews in the first week back at school and minimises the risk of delays to your return.

If you are at least 21 days post-injury and have been well, and have demonstrated some form of return to exercise over the holiday period, it is very likely our clinicians will provisionally sign off your return to unrestricted sport, as long as a full training session on return to school doesn't cause any issues.

