



Concussion Protocol Summary

OTTAWA SWANS AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB CONCUSSION PROTOCOL SUMMARY

For the full Ottawa Swans Concussion Protocol, please visit: [here](#)

1. All athletes, parents, coaches, trainers and officials participating in Ottawa Swans activities are required to review the *Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport Pre-season Concussion Education Sheet* prior to the first practice of the season. In addition to reviewing information on concussion, it is also important that all sport stakeholders have a clear understanding of the Ottawa Swans Concussion Protocol.
2. In the event that an athlete is suspected to have sustained a concussion or other head injury the following procedures must be followed:
 - a) If a severe head or neck (spine) injury is suspected, an ambulance should be called immediately to transfer the athlete to the nearest hospital for medical assessment.
 - b) If an athlete has signs or symptoms of a concussion, they must be removed from participation (including warm-up, practice and competition) immediately and be medically assessed as soon as possible.
 - c) If the athlete develops delayed concussion symptoms (e.g., in the evening after competition), they should be medically assessed as soon as possible by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.
 - d) All athletes with a suspected concussion must provide a **Medical Assessment Letter** indicating whether or not they have been diagnosed with a concussion. Completed forms should be submitted to the Coach and Exec
3. If an athlete has been medically assessed and that assessment confirms the athlete does not have a concussion, they can return to full participation.
4. **If an athlete is diagnosed with a concussion**, they must follow the Australian-Rules-Football-specific Return-to-Sport Strategy.
5. An athlete diagnosed with a concussion must provide a **Medical Clearance Letter** before returning to full practice and competition/gameplay.

The stepwise progressions for *Return-to-School* and *Return-to-Sport Strategies* are outlined below. As indicated in stage 1 of the *Return-to-Sport Strategy*, reintroduction of daily, school, and work activities using the *Return-to-School Strategy* must precede return to sport participation.

Australian Rules Football-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy

The following is an outline of the Return-to-Sport Strategy that should be used to help athletes, coaches, trainers, and medical professionals to partner in allowing the athlete to make a gradual return to sport activities. An initial period of 24-48 hours of rest is recommended before starting the *Australian Rules Football-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy* (based on document found [here](#)). The athlete should spend a minimum duration of 24 hours without symptom increases at each stage before progressing to the next one. If the athlete experiences new symptoms or worsening symptoms at any stage, they should go back to the previous stage or step.

Stage	Aim	Activity	Goal of each step
1	REST	1. Relative Rest - 24-48 Hours	A brief period of relative rest
2	RECOVERY	2. Symptom limited activity - Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms 3. Symptom limited activity - Light aerobic exercise (e.g. walking/jog/cycling at a slow to medium pace) - No resistance training 4. Symptom limited activity - Moderate aerobic exercise (i.e. increased heart rate) - No resistance training 5. Symptom limited activity - Increased intensity and duration of activity - Add sports-specific drills (e.g. goal kick, stationary handball etc) - Commence resistance training	A recovery period where a symptom-limited progressive increase in physical and cognitive activity is encouraged. In addition, the player requires medical clearance to enter Stage 3 of the return to play program.
3	GRADED RETURN TO TRAINING AND PLAY	6. Non-contact training - Return to full team training sessions - non-contact only 7. Recovery day - Can participate in other components of the training program (e.g. weights) 8. Limited contact training - Full team training - but able to participate in drills with incidental contact (including tackling) 9. Recovery day - Can participate in other components of the training program (e.g. weights) 10. Full contact - Full team training 11. Recovery day - Can participate in other components of the training program (e.g. weights)	A graded return to full activity with monitoring. This stage consists of six steps prior to a medical clearance for unrestricted return to play. Players can only enter Stage 3 once they have clinically recovered, including the completion of a SCAT5 demonstrating return to baseline
4	RETURN TO PLAY		

For more information on concussion please visit:

- AFLs concussion protocol [here](#)
- Parachute – www.parachute.ca/concussion