



RETURN TO SWIM

SWIMMING SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR A GRADUATED RTP FOLLOWING CONCUSSION

USA Swimming Concussion Task Force has created swimming-specific return-to-play guidelines that match the current standard of care and the unique demands of competitive swimming

STAGE 1 SYMPTOM LIMITED

ACTIVITY

- Symptom limited activity
- Activities of daily living
- Return to school with supports
- Limited exacerbation of symptoms

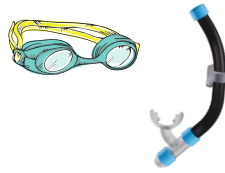
STAGE 2 LIGHT-MODERATE AEROBIC EXERCISE

- 20 Minutes
- Kicking with a kickboard
- Age appropriate max heart rate 55-70%
- Land based aerobic exercise option: stationary bike or elliptical
- Light resistance exercise
- No more than mild symptom exacerbation



STAGE 3 SPORT SPECIFIC EXERCISE

- 30 minutes
- Swimming with limited head movement (non-restrictive snorkel)
- Introduction of strokes in the following order: Breast, Free (with snorkel), Fly, Back
- Open turns only
- No diving starts
- Age appropriate max heart rate 70-75%



STAGE 4 NON-CONTACT TRAINING DRILLS

- 30 minutes
- Interval training
- All strokes, no limitations in order
- Increase coordination and cognitive load
- Open turns only
- No diving starts
- Age appropriate max heart rate 70-80%



STAGE 5 FULL PRACTICE

- 45-60 minutes, as tolerated
- Introduction of flip turns and starts (in deep water only) as tolerated
- No more than 50% of time spent at age appropriate max heart rate 85%



STAGE 6 RETURN TO COMPETITION

- Unrestricted return to competition



Key Considerations:

- RTP should be completed with adequate pool space and under supervision of a healthcare provider
- Land based RTP is recommended if pool space is not available
- Stages 1-3 are considered concussion treatment and may span several days
- Stages 4-6 should start after resolution of symptoms and any clinical findings related to the concussion
- No less than 24 hours should be between stages