

What to Expect After a Concussion

- A concussion is a **mild** brain injury caused by a blow to the head, face, neck, or body that causes a sudden shaking of the brain within the skull.
- Concussion is a **functional** injury, meaning it affects how the brain works. Since there is no structural brain damage, concussions cannot be seen on traditional brain scans.
- People who sustain a concussion are expected to make a full recovery.

How long will it take for me to feel better?

Adults: Most adults no longer have post-concussion symptoms and can return to usual function within three weeks.

Children: Most children no longer have post-concussion symptoms and can return to usual function within four weeks.



What behaviours may cause recovery to take longer?

Resting for too long: Research shows that prolonged rest and excessive avoidance of one's usual activities beyond 24-48 hours after concussion is harmful to recovery.

Doing too much: "Pushing through" symptoms to do too many activities in a day can lead to the brain and body not having the energy needed to heal or perform other activities.

What behaviors may improve recovery?

Education: A better understanding of concussion and what to expect during recovery can help you feel better about your injury and use strategies to manage symptoms.

Pacing: It is important to find a balance between activity and rest that allows you to do the things you need and want to do while not making your symptoms worse. You should also avoid any activity that may put you at risk for another concussion (e.g., contact sports) until your symptoms are gone and your doctor has cleared you to return to these activities.