

School Accommodations for Post-Concussion Effects

Post-concussion Effect	Functional School Problem	What Should Teacher/Staff/Student Do
Attention/Concentration	Short focus on lecture, class work, homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter assignments/ break down tasks • Avoid testing or completion of major projects during recovery time • Provide extra time to complete non-standardized tests in a quiet environment • Postpone standardized test when possible • Consider one test per day during exam periods • Provide study guides, class notes and/or allow student to use a computer or tape recorder to record class information • Assign a peer to take notes for the student
Working Memory	Holding instructions in mind, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetition, use of calculator • Shorter reading passages • Provide written instructions and help for homework and classwork
Memory consolidation/retrieval	Retaining new information, accessing learned information when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller chunks to learn • Provide alternate methods for the student to demonstrate mastery such as multiple choice or spoken responses to questions rather than essay responses
Processing speed	Keep pace with work demand, process verbal information effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended time, slow down verbal information, comprehension checking
Fatigue	Decreased arousal, activation to engage basic attention, working memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest breaks during classes, homework and examinations
Headaches	Interferes with concentration; Can be triggered by fluorescent lighting, loud noises, focusing on tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest breaks • Turn off fluorescent lights • Rest in quiet area
Depression/withdrawal	Withdrawal from school or friends because of stigma or activity restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time built in for socialization • Talk with student about these issues and offer encouragement
Light/noise sensitivity	Symptoms worsen in bright or loud environments; difficulty reading paying attention to visual tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear sunglasses/ sit away from bright sunlight • Avoid noisy/crowded environments such as lunchroom, assemblies and hallways • Use ear plugs • Reduce brightness on screens and exposure to computers and videos

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferential seating • Cover one eye with patch/tape or one lens if glasses are worn • Turn off fluorescent lights • Provide quiet place to study
Dizziness/balance problems	Unsteadiness when walking; often provoked by visual stimulus such as rapid movements, videos, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator pass • Allow student to put head down if symptoms worsen • Early dismissal from class • Extra time to get from class to class to avoid crowded hallways
Sleep disturbance	Decreased arousal, shifted sleep schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Later start time, shortened day • Allow rest breaks during day
Anxiety	Can interfere with concentration, student may push through symptoms to prevent falling behind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassurance from teachers and team about accommodations • Workload reduction • Alternate forms of testing
Symptoms sensitivity	Symptoms worsen with overactivity, resulting in any of the earlier mentioned problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce cognitive or physical demands below symptom threshold • Provide rest breaks • Complete work in small increments until symptom threshold increases
Emotional/mood symptoms	Sadness, irritability, mood changes, nervousness, anxiety may affect social relationships. Student may feel scared, angry or depressed as a result of the concussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an emotional support plan for student • Allow “signal” for student to remove him/herself from classroom to de-escalate • Provide reassurance that what they are feeling is typical in the course of recovery (i.e., concern about getting behind in school work) • Share difficulties and progress with parents, school staff, medical personnel, athletic staff • Locate a quiet place for student to go if they feel overwhelmed • Student may benefit from certain extracurricular activities approved by health care provider • Connect student to psychological services