

Managing Symptoms During Exercise

- Exercise is important for a healthy lifestyle and improves recovery from concussion. Some people find it difficult to exercise because of their concussion symptoms.
- There are things you can do to avoid symptoms while exercising. These strategies are meant to be temporary and reduced as the brain heals.
- Your healthcare team can help you decide which strategies are appropriate for you.

Follow guidance from your healthcare team to exercise at an appropriate level for your recovery. Your team will give you a specific activity (e.g., walking), level of intensity (how hard to exercise), and duration (how long to exercise).

Limit distractions that make you think while exercising, such as television, podcasts, or talking to a friend. These activities make your brain work harder and may add more stimulation than your brain can tolerate while healing.

Protect yourself from light and noise if they provoke symptoms by wearing a hat/sunglasses and earplugs. Try exercising outside in the morning or evening when the sun is less bright, and roads and paths are less busy.

Plan to exercise when you usually feel best (e.g., early afternoon) and choose your activity and route in advance. Take routes that are familiar to you and avoid very stimulating environments like busy roadways or wooded trails.

Take breaks while exercising or lower your intensity level (e.g., walk slower) if you start to feel symptomatic. Also plan to take a rest break after exercising to cool down and prepare for your next activity.