



Cognitive Management = Academic Management

Best Practice Guidelines for Cognitive Rest

Cognitive rest is an often neglected component of concussion recovery. A student recovering from a concussion is faced with predictable challenges in the academic realm. Mental/physical fatigue and sleep disruption may leave the student-athlete without the mental capacity to participate in a full day of classes and subsequent efforts necessary for assignments or scheduled exams.

Our therapeutic goal during recovery involves eliminating athletic activity and limiting physical activity as well as increasing cognitive rest by reducing demands pertaining to learning, concentration, and memory as these are directly affected by a concussion. The therapeutic goal requires a synchronization of academic support initiated by the Athletic Trainer to the Dean of Students office resulting in communication with professors and possibly the Office of Disability Services.

Ultimately, our goal is to assist a recovering student in fulfilling academic requirements being cautious not to overload cognitive functions resulting in a worsening of symptoms. In essence, developing a plan between the Dean of Students office and medical staff prioritizes academic efforts through utilization of the following recommendations and/or referral to Disability Support Services. In prolonged or more severe cases, a neuropsychological evaluation may be requested from the attending physician for review by the Disability Services Office to determine appropriate academic recommendations.

The following recommendations will promote cognitive rest, and ensure the student continued educational success as symptoms resolve.

Recommendations for the Student Recovering from a Concussion

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
Excused absence from class	Complete rest, progressing to limited attendance, may be needed
Rest period during the day	When symptoms flare, brief rest may allow student to return to class
Reduction of light or noise sensitivity	Fluorescent light and high-stimulation environments may cause symptoms
Monitor computer use, TV use, video games, music	Avoidance of cognitive stresses
Reduced course load/credits	Full course load may worsen symptoms
Preferential classroom seating	Lessens distractions
Temporary assistance of a tutor or academic coach	Assists in organizing and prioritizing assignments
Extension of assignment deadlines	Postponement or staggering of exams in accordance with the professor's make up privileges
Information processing speed and ability to handle full workload may be impeded	Mental efforts to prepare and then take tests may worsen symptoms
Excuse from team sport practice or athletic activities	No physical activity progresses to limited physical activity