

# How to support a concussed athlete during recovery

## HELP THE PLAYER RETURN TO SPORT

- Know and follow the graded return to sport strategy
- Keep a close dialogue with athlete, parents, or health professional during recovery
- Allow the athlete to take breaks during the training to monitor symptoms, especially as progression starts
- Provide possibilities for athletes to do light aerobic exercise – e.g., stationary biking or rowing when the team are doing warm-up – consider a quiet environment with less noise and visual stimuli in the beginning
- Let the athlete help with practicalities in the training session if he/she cannot participate in actual training yet, e.g. setting up cones or keeping track of the score
- Let the athlete help training the goalie or join other activities with fewer people involved, shooting, or collecting balls etc. with limited risk of getting a new concussion
- Let the athlete provide feedback to the team, like a co-coach, if they can manage – sometimes it is too much to watch the training because of many visual inputs and because of the noise
- Make room for the concussed athlete to do their rehabilitation or exercises during practise session, maybe in a quieter environment if possible. If there are other athletes that are injured – let them do their rehabilitation together

## INCLUDE THE CONCUSSED PLAYER SOCIALLY

- Ask the concussed athlete how he/she would like things to be during the recovery and return to sport and how you and the team can help
- Choose a teammate to be the person of contact for the concussed player so not everybody ask: “how are you”, “when are you coming back” etc. – the contact person can deliver messages and updates to the team and making sure that the concussed athlete is still part of the team
- Make sure that the team knows about the concussion and how to react and support the best way (link to how to support)
- Allow the athlete to skip meetings and social gatherings during the recovery, sometimes they will be over-stimulated in such setting

## ASK HOW THEY ARE DOING

- Ask where the athlete is at now, on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is they are doing really well and 1 is the opposite.
- Ask how they got there – what are they or others doing that helped get them to that number; and
- Ask what would be happening if they were one number higher on the scale