



Return to Play Policy

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IMPORTANT

If there is a discrepancy between this Fit to Play/Return to Play Guidelines, and any of the following manuals; Hockey Calgary Rules/Regulations, Hockey Canada, Bylaws or the Southwest Hockey Association Policy and Procedures, those documents will take precedence over these Guidelines.

Any discrepancies should promptly be brought to the attention of the Contacts listed in Section 2.0

Have a FANTASTIC & SAFE season!!!

1.0 What's NEW?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CATT Online Certification is optional
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2.0 Contact Information

Questions surrounding the Return to Play Policy can be directed to:

SW Director of Coaches:	coaches@southwesthockey.ca
SW Asst Director of Coaches:	asst-coaches@southwesthockey.ca
Vice President On-Ice:	vpon-ice@southwesthockey.ca
SW Administrator:	admin@southwesthockey.ca

3.0 Hockey Canada - Injury Reports

The Hockey Canada Injury Report Form; **MUST** be submitted (by the family of the injured player) **directly to Hockey Alberta within 90 days** of the injury, in order for a claim for expenses to be made. The form must be completed in its entirety or the form will be returned. This is a 'hard date' as mandated by Hockey Alberta.

Injury Report Forms can be requested through the Team Manager, or the SW Administrator. The Injury Report Forms can also be found on the SW Hockey website.

Note: If a player does go to the hospital (via ambulance or by car), there are sections on the Injury Report Form that need to be filled out and signed by the Doctor.

The Injury Report Form, along with any required attachments need to be mailed to Hockey Alberta directly. Hockey Alberta's address can be found on the Injury Form:

4.0 Hockey Canada Insurance

Hockey Canada is strictly a supplemental (secondary) insurer. If families have access to other insurance through an employer or independent provider, they must pursue the claim through that provider first. Hockey Canada may cover those costs not covered by the family's' primary insurance to their policy limits.

For current insurance information, it would be best to either check the Hockey Canada website, or contact Hockey Alberta.

Here is the Hockey Canada link: <https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/hockey-programs/safety/essentials/downloads.aspx>

5.0 Return to Play – General

Southwest Hockey wants to reduce the number of injuries by minimizing the occurrences of players participating in games or practices; when they are not "fit to play" due to illness or injury.

All injuries are of concern, and players **should not play injured**.

In an ideal world, every Minor Hockey team would have a qualified Trainer to assess players and make determinations when it is unsafe for them to play. This is not currently feasible in Minor Hockey.

Therefore, Southwest Hockey is empowering its Head Coaches to make determinations using their best judgment, as to whether a player is allowed to play in a game or a practice.

Recognizing that coaches might not be medically trained; Southwest Hockey understands that an inconvenience may occur. However, Southwest Hockey has determined that the inconvenience is in the best interest of the athlete, rather than allowing the athlete to play, when they should not have; due to an injury, illness or concussion.

Note: In the event the Head Coach is not in attendance, this decision would go to the next Assistant Coach “in charge”; who is running/leading the game or practice.

Important: The Resources that have been provided within this policy; **DO NOT** replace medical advice. Your doctor should be consulted with regards to injuries, illnesses and concussions.

If in doubt, Coaches will err on the side of caution.

6.0 Injuries and Illnesses - Protocol

6.1 Concussion Injury

Southwest Hockey follows the **Hockey Canada Six-Step Method** for return to play, for Concussion in Sport.

A concussion can be caused by any force that causes the brain to significantly move inside the skull. This can include a direct hit to the head, or an indirect hit to the body. A concussion can cause immediate impairment of brain function, or can result in deteriorating function over time. If not properly managed, concussions can have lasting effects on athletes. Also, if an athlete has not fully recovered from a previous concussion, there is a chance that the healing time may take longer and symptoms could be worse with each subsequent concussion.

Coaching staff should familiarize themselves with symptoms of a concussion, and review the Hockey Canada Concussion Policy. The Hockey Canada Concussion Policy can be found on the SW Hockey website.

The following “Concussion Tools” are also being provided for referencing, which can be printed from the SW Hockey website. They are:

- Hockey Canada Concussion Policy
- Hockey Canada Concussion Card
- Concussion Follow-up and Communication Form
- Concussion Recognition Tool

Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be **IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM PLAY**, and assessed medically as soon as possible. The athlete should not be left alone and should not drive a motor vehicle.

6.1.1 Making a Determination

If the Coach is of the opinion that a concussion may have occurred; using appropriate protocols, the Coach has the authority and should declare the athlete unfit to play. The athlete shall then not participate in the practice or game.

The parent and athlete must accept the determination of the Coach.

If the parent disagrees that the athlete is “unfit” to play, they can obtain a note from a medical doctor that confirms the athlete has been seen for the concussion in question and **is “cleared for play that may include body contact”**.

Note: Because accidental contact can occur in all age groups (not just “Body Checking Age Divisions”), obtaining a medical note clearing the athlete, **is a requirement for ALL age groups**.

If the injury was a concussion, then the Hockey Canada Concussion Policy should be followed, including medical clearance, confirming that the player is permitted to return and is “cleared to participate in contact activity”.

6.1.2 Medical Return to Play Form

For a copy of the Medical Return to Play Form, visit the SW Hockey website.

6.2 Significant Injury

Southwest Hockey defines a ‘Significant Injury’, as any injury that a player sustains (excluding concussions), that requires the player to be absent from hockey for a period of greater than one week. Examples are; but not limited to: broken bones, severe sprains or strains etc.

If before, or during a game or practice, an athlete is noticed by a Coach to appear to be suffering from an injury, other than an injury with suspected concussion symptoms, the Coach should first talk to the athlete and their parent, to determine the nature of the injury.

6.2.1 Making a Determination

If the Coach is of the opinion that the condition could put the athlete at an increased risk of further injury, or if the ability of the athlete to play ‘normally’ is noticeably diminished, the Coach has the authority and should declare the athlete unfit to play, and the athlete shall then not participate in the practice or game.

The parent and athlete must accept the determination of the Coach.

If the parent disagrees that the athlete is “unfit” to play, they can obtain a note from a medical doctor that confirms the athlete has been seen for the injury in question and **is “cleared for play that may include body contact”**.

Note: Because accidental contact can occur in all age groups (not just “Body Checking Age Divisions”), obtaining a medical note clearing the athlete, **is a requirement for ALL age groups**.

If the injury was a bone break/fracture; all broken/fractured bones WILL REQUIRE a note from a medical doctor confirming that the player is permitted to return and is “cleared to participate in a contact activity”.

6.2.2 Medical Return to Play Form

For a copy of the Medical Return to Play Form, visit the SW Hockey website.

6.3 Illness

If before, or during a game or practice, an athlete is noticed by a Coach to appear to be suffering from an illness, more severe than a common cold, the Coach should first talk to the athlete and a parent of the athlete to determine the nature of the illness.

6.3.1 Making a Determination

If the Coach is of the opinion that the condition could put the athlete or other athletes at an increased risk of illness, the Coach will have the authority and should declare the athlete “unfit” to play. The athlete shall then not participate, in the practice or game.

The parent and athlete must accept the determination of the Coach for the immediate game or practice.

If the parent disagrees that the athlete is “unfit” to play, they can obtain a note from a medical doctor that confirms the athlete **is “cleared for play”**.

6.3.1 Medical Return to Play Form

For a copy of the Medical Return to Play Form, visit the SW Hockey website.

7.0 Cattonline.com

The Concussion Awareness Training Tool (CATT) is a series of online educational modules and resources with the goal of standardizing concussion recognition, diagnosis, treatment, and management. Good concussion management is pivotal to minimizing the risk of brain damage and may reduce long-term health consequences.

The CATT Course for Coaches and the Course for Parents is FREE & contains the same basic content. This 40-minute course provides concussion education for both coaches and parents. Although the courses are the same for coaches and parents, the quizzes within the course are different for each audience.

Link: <https://cattonline.com/coach/>

Note: The CATT Course, is a tool that is being referenced, in addition to the Hockey Concussion Policy and is not meant to replace Hockey Canada protocols, and rather to provide additional information surrounding concussions.

8.0 Six Step - Return to Play (Concussion & other Significant Injury)

8.1 General Overview

Southwest Hockey will utilize the **Hockey Canada Six – Step Method** for return to play for concussions, and significant injuries.

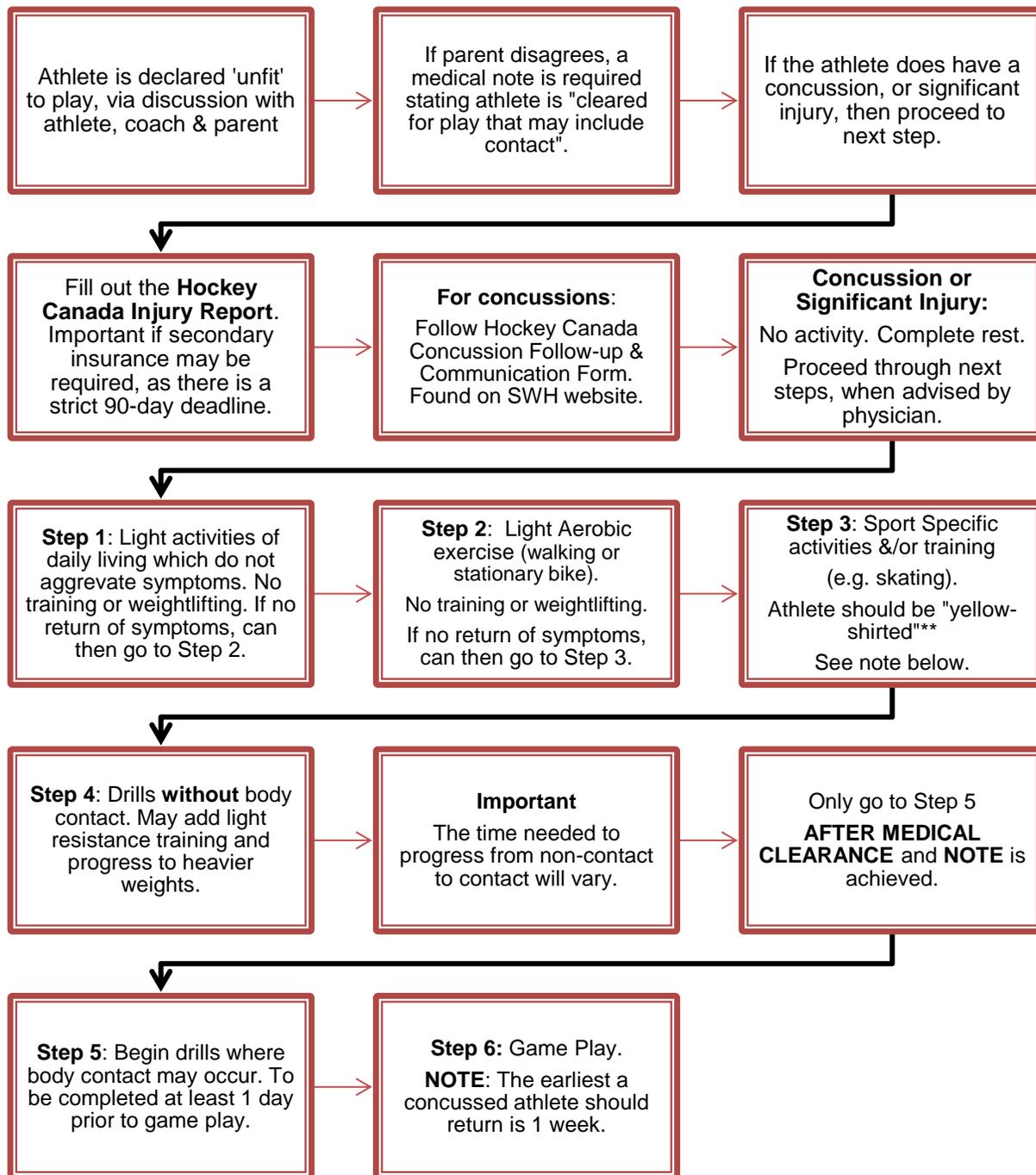
Return to play guidelines should be guided by the treating physician. As per the Hockey Canada Six – Step Method; **the return to play strategy is gradual, and begins after a doctor has given the athlete clearance to return to activity**. If symptoms return during the process, the athlete must return to the noted step in the chart, and be re-evaluated by a doctor.

Note: Symptoms may return later that day or the next, not necessarily when exercising! Each step should have a **minimum of one day**. If an athlete’s symptoms return, the athlete should return to Step 2 and be re-evaluated by a physician.

There is NO return to play, if any symptoms persist. The athlete may not return to the roster until the return to play criteria has been met.

The Head Coach should be kept apprised of all changes in the athlete’s condition.

8.2 Six – Step Return to Play Chart



Note: ** Yellow-shirted; means the athlete should be in a different colour jersey than the rest of the team. This ensures they are clearly identified from the rest of the team, as there should be no contact at this time.

- The injured athlete should be in a 'safe-corner' working on simply skating & movements. If symptoms return, the athlete should go to the bench and rest. Depending on symptoms, if the athlete feels the symptoms are significant, they should not return to the ice, and follow up with their doctor.