

**FIGURE 3.**

# STAGES OF GRADED RETURN TO PLAY

STAGE 1: RELATIVE REST <span style="float: right;">1</span>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b> <b>Relative rest</b> Gentle day-to-day activities - as guided by symptoms. Minimise screen time (TV, computer/homework/work, phone/social media and gaming)	<b>DURATION</b> 1-2 days	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Nothing specific - should progress after 1-2 days
STAGE 2: RECOVERY <span style="float: right;">2</span>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b> <b>i. Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms</b> Increase day-to-day activities - as guided by symptoms. Include short walks. Limit screen time (TV, computer/homework/work, phone/social media and gaming) -duration depends on symptoms No team training drills. No resistance training.	<b>DURATION</b> Minimum 1 day	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if concussion-related symptoms resolved or not worsened from their previous level (either during activity or by the next day)
<b>ii. Light aerobic exercise</b> Start light activity e.g., walking, jogging or cycling at a slow to medium pace. Aim for about 50-60% maximum heart rate (can carry a conversation when exercising) No team training drills. No resistance training.	<b>DURATION</b> Minimum 1 day	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if concussion-related symptoms resolved or not worsened from their previous level (either during activity or by the next day)
<b>iii. Moderate aerobic exercise</b> Start moderate aerobic exercise e.g., walking, jogging or cycling at a medium pace. Aim for about 60-80% maximum heart rate. May continue with moderate aerobic exercise over a number of days/sessions if still has symptoms related to concussion. No team training drills. No resistance training.	<b>DURATION</b> Minimum 2 days	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if concussion-related symptoms resolved or not worsened from their previous level (either during activity or by the next day)
<b>iv. High intensity aerobic exercise</b> Start high-intensity aerobic exercise (e.g. running or cycling at high intensity) Up to maximum heart rate. No team training drills. Can commence gentle resistance training (50-75% of usual loads)	<b>DURATION</b> Minimum 2 days	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if <b>a) Complete recovery of all concussion-related symptoms and signs at rest and with high intensity training;</b> <b>b) Have returned to school or work (without any need for modifications);</b>
STAGE 3: GRADED LOADING PROGRAM <span style="float: right;">3</span>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b> <b>i. Non-contact training</b> Return to full team training sessions - <u>non-contact activities only</u> Minimum of 2-3 training sessions with no consecutive days of football training (to allow for rest and recovery)	<b>DURATION</b> Minimum 7 days	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if remaining completely free of any concussion-related symptoms*
<b>ii. Limited contact training</b> Full team training allowed -able to participate in drills with incidental and/or controlled contact (including tackling) <u>No consecutive days of training (i.e. must have 'non-contact activity' days in between training sessions)</u>	<b>DURATION</b> Minimum of 7 days to progress through graded contact training	<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if: a) Remaining completely free of any concussion-related symptoms* b) Player is confident to return to full contact training <b>c) Player has medical clearance to return to full contact training</b>
<b>iii. Full contact training</b>		<b>CRITERIA TO PROGRESS</b> Progress if: a) Remaining completely free of any concussion-related symptoms* <b>b) Player is confident to return to play</b>
STAGE 4: UNRESTRICTED RETURN TO PLAY <span style="float: right;">4</span>		

\*If concussion-related symptoms reappear at any time in stage 3 (Graded loading program) then the player should go back to the previous symptom-free step in stage 2 (Recovery) and seek medical review from a doctor.