



**EQUESTRIAN SPORTS  
NEW ZEALAND**

**ESNZ CONCUSSION  
RETURN TO RIDING FORM**

**ESNZ General Regulation Article 150**

8. If a concussion is suspected, by a member of the Ground Jury, or event medical personal, at the event, the rider should be immediately removed from participating. The rider should then be referred for immediate medical review or have an assessment from a medical professional post-event – for confirmation or exclusion of a concussion and consideration of other diagnoses. No rider should return to riding or competition on the day of a suspected or confirmed concussive injury. Full return to riding competition should be no earlier than Day 21 post-injury and only if the rider has been medically cleared to return to riding and competition during that final week.

8.1. All riders who have been withdrawn from competition due to a suspected concussion are required to provide ESNZ with a medical clearance note from a registered GP or registered medical specialist before they are able to compete again. Once this has been received the Blue Card will be withdrawn.

8.2. If a rider who has been issued with a Blue Card competes without first providing medical clearance, this may result in disciplinary action taken through the ESNZ disciplinary process set out in the ESNZ General Regulations.

**Athletes/Riders:**

- If you have been issued with this Blue Card form which prevents you from taking further part in competition over the next 24 hours at least, it is because a qualified ESNZ Official is concerned that you have a suspected concussion. Your safety and wellbeing are paramount.
- Please ensure that over the next 24 - 48 hours you (and your family or friends) check for signs and symptoms of concussion.
- It is required that you seek medical attention within 24 – 48 hours, to have an assessment for concussion.
- If concussion is confirmed by a medical professional, **you will be required to stand down from competition for at least 21 days**, upon which you can provide medical clearance to compete again.
- It is your responsibility to visit a doctor to secure a clearance. Send your clearance form to [nzef@nzequestrian.org.nz](mailto:nzef@nzequestrian.org.nz) (during office hours)

**Doctors/Medical Specialists:**

This form is adapted from the Equestrian Sports New Zealand Concussion Policy which can be found on our website - [www.nzequestrian.org.nz/safety/concussion/](http://www.nzequestrian.org.nz/safety/concussion/) , and is in accordance with ACC and Axis Sports Medicine ([www.axisportsmedicine.co.nz/](http://www.axisportsmedicine.co.nz/)). All medical providers are encouraged to review these sites if they have any questions regarding the latest information on the evaluation and care of the athlete following a concussion injury.

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>This return to riding plan is based on today's evaluation.</b></p> <p>Care plan completed by: _____</p> <p>Return to riding on (date): _____</p>	<p>Date of Evaluation: _____</p> <p>Return to this office. Date/Time: _____</p> <p>Return to competition on (date): _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(may confirm at a later time)</p>
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**Return to Riding:**

1. Athletes should not return to riding on the same day that their head injury occurred
2. Athletes should never return to riding if they still have ANY symptoms
3. Athletes, be sure that your coach and/or an ESNZ Official or First Aid person are aware of your injury, symptoms, and has the contact information for the treating Doctor.

**Medical Office Information (Please Print/Stamp):**

Doctor's/Specialist's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor's/Specialist's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_





Day 0 = Day of the injury/concussion

## GRADUATED RETURN TO EDUCATION/WORK & SPORT PROTOCOL

<b>STAGE</b> 1	<b>Days 1 - 2</b>		Relative Rest for 24-48 hours (i.e light activities of daily living that do not provoke symptoms are ok) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize screen time</li> <li>• Gentle exercise (i.e. walking around the house)</li> </ul>
<b>STAGE</b> 2	<b>Days 2 – 13</b>	<i>Minimum of 24 hours between stages before progressing</i>	Gradually introduce daily activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities away from school/work (introduce TV, increase reading, games etc)</li> <li>• Exercise – light physical activity (e.g. short walks outside)</li> </ul>
<b>STAGE</b> 3		Symptoms should be progressively <i>improving</i> .	Increase tolerance for mental & exercise activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase study/work-related activities with rest periods</li> <li>• Increase intensity of exercise guided by symptoms</li> </ul>
<b>STAGE</b> 4		If symptoms worsen drop back a stage.	Return to work/study & sport training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part time return to work/education</li> <li>• Start training activity without risk of head impact</li> </ul>
<b>STAGE</b> 5	<b>Earliest Day 14</b>		Return to normal work/study & sport-specific training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of Stages 1- 4 <b>AND</b></li> <li>• Fully reintegrated into work or school <b>AND</b></li> <li>• <b>Symptom free at rest</b></li> <li>• <b>AND ≥ Day 14 post-injury</b> → reintegration into full sport-specific training can occur</li> </ul>
<b>STAGE</b> 6	<b>Earliest Day 21</b>		Return to sports competition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of Stage 5 <b>AND</b></li> <li>• <b>Symptom free during sports training</b></li> <li>• <b>AND ≥ Day 21 post-injury</b></li> <li>• <b>AND</b> it is strongly recommended that the rider has received medical clearance from a qualified medical professional (from general practice or primary care team).</li> </ul>