



Orillia Channel Cats Swim Club Concussion Gradual Return to Practice Protocol

Step	Activity	Details
1	Symptom-limited activity	Light activities of daily living, limited cognitive exertion. No swimming yet.
2	Light aerobic exercise	Gentle swimming (e.g., kicking with a board, light freestyle) in short sessions. No head turns, flip turns, or dives. Supervised.
3	Sport-specific exercise	Moderate swim drills. Add flip turns and head movements cautiously. No starts/dives or hard sets.
4	Non-contact training	Resume full swim practice without starts. Add dryland exercises that don't risk falls/head impact. Monitor for fatigue, balance, or vision issues.
5	Full-contact practice	Resume all training including starts/dives under supervision. Should be completely symptom-free.
6	Return to competition	Full return to swim meets and high-intensity training.

Red Flags to Watch For

If any of the following occur, stop the activity immediately:

- Headache
 - Dizziness
 - Nausea
 - Blurred or double vision
 - Light or noise sensitivity
 - Difficulty concentrating or confusion
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Tips for Swimmers, Coaches, and Parents

- **Communication is key** – keep the coach informed of symptoms and progress.

- **Avoid early return under pressure** – returning too soon increases risk of a second concussion or long-term issues.
- **Hydration and rest** are critical during recovery.
- **Be cautious with dryland** – especially activities with risk of falls (e.g., box jumps, sprints).