

Second brochure

## **Return to Play: When Can I ride**

### **Wake Up to Concussions: recovery**

All concussions should be medically assessed and managed. Recovery and management of each individual's concussion should follow physicians instructions. The following information is provided to give some ideas for returning to activity. This information is for educational purposes and is not meant to replace medical diagnosis and supervision of concussion.

#### *How and when can I ride again?*

When you have been free of all symptoms for at least 24 hours, you can start activity.

#### *Once completely asymptomatic for at least 24 hours, what physical activities can I do?*

**It is common for any symptom(s) to return with increased levels of exertion. If any symptom(s) re-occurs when beginning light exertion movement, go back to complete rest.** From no activity and complete rest, the rider can begin with light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling to confirm her/his balance and equilibrium for short periods of time. If symptom(s) do return with increased levels of exertion, drop back to the previous asymptomatic level.

Once back to riding, begin with hacking work to confirm concentration and memory. Then the rider can progress to anaerobic work, galloping or jumping. ***Again, it is common for any symptom(s) to return with increased levels of exertion.*** If any symptom(s) do return, drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and try the progression again.

***Return to competition only after riding at a high level of work for 5 – 7 consecutive days without any recurring symptoms.***

### **Wake Up to Concussions**

#### *What if the rider has another falls and sustains a second or third concussion?*

Concussions can have a cumulative effect over time and successive ones over a lifetime may take longer to heal. Recovery speed will vary among individuals and requires medical supervision.

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade 1 concussion** – return to riding only 1 week *after* there are no symptoms both at rest and during exertion *and* being medically cleared by a physician

- **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade 1 concussion** – return to riding only 1 month *after* there are no symptoms both at rest and during exertion *and* being medically cleared by a physician
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade 2 concussion** – return to riding only 1 month *after* there are no symptoms both at rest and during exertion *and* being medically cleared by physician
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade 2 concussion** – rider should consider sitting out remainder of season and/or return to riding only 3 – 6 months *after* there are no symptoms both at rest and during exertion *and* being medically cleared by physician
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade 3 concussion** – return to riding only 3 – 6 months *after* there are no symptoms both at rest and during exertion *and* being medically cleared by physician and/or should consider sitting out remainder of season
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade 3 concussion** - do not return to riding for 3 – 6 months and/or *remainder* of the season *regardless* if there are no symptoms at rest and during exertion during that period.

*After multiple concussions, it may be necessary for the rider to consider discontinuing contact sports. Remember, all concussions count – it doesn't matter if traumas to the head are caused by falls from horses, car accidents, other sports related injuries such as skiing or soccer, or falls against a hard surface like the floor, a rock or a tree.*

### **Wake Up to Concussions**

- The most common head injury in sports is concussion
- Riding is a contact sport, just like football, soccer, skiing, boxing, etc.
- Take responsibility for your own riding.
- Know your personal concussion history. Make a list of *all* remembered/known concussions - include all traumas to the head (car accident, skiing, cycling, etc.) regardless of the cause(s).
- Pay attention to any key symptom(s) you may have as a result of hitting your head caused by falling off your horse
- Seek medical advice/evaluation if any symptom(s) persist.
- *Never* “tough out” any symptom(s) of concussion.

For more information about the management of concussion in sport contact: Brain Injury Association at (800)444 6442 or [www.headinjury.com](http://www.headinjury.com) or [brain@headinjury.com](mailto:brain@headinjury.com); the Centers for Disease Control at [www.cdc.gov/ncip/tbi](http://www.cdc.gov/ncip/tbi); or the USEA Safety Committee at [concussion@equestriansafety.com](mailto:concussion@equestriansafety.com).