This tool is a guideline for managing an individual’s return to work following a concussion and does not replace medical advice. The goal for each stage is to find the ‘sweet spot’ between doing too much and doing too little. Timelines and activities may vary by direction of a health care professional.

Initial physical and cognitive rest
- Rest in a quiet and calm environment.
- Try activities that do not aggravate symptoms (e.g., listening to quiet music or coloring).
- Sleep as much as your body needs while trying to maintain a regular night sleeping schedule.

Limit:
- Lengthy social visits.
- Screen time (smartphone, computer, television) and reading.

Avoid:
- Sports or physical activities that increase your heart rate or cause you to break a sweat.

NOTE: It is recommended to discuss driving with a licensed medical professional for safety considerations.

Rest
When symptoms start to improve OR after resting for 2 days max, BEGIN STAGE 2

Gradually increase activity
When 30 minutes of activity is tolerated, BEGIN STAGE 3
When 4 hours of activity is tolerated, with breaks as needed, BEGIN STAGE 4
When ready for regular work hours with accommodations, BEGIN STAGE 5
When regular work hours are tolerated with min. accommodations, BEGIN STAGE 6

Recognizing that workplace environments vary by industry and occupation, returning to work may focus more on a return to cognitive activity, physical activity, or a combination of both. It is normal to experience symptoms during recovery; you do not have to wait to be symptom free before returning to work. However, after Stage 2, if new or worsening symptoms appear at any stage, go back to the previous stage for at least 24 hours. You many need to move back a stage more than once during the recovery process.