

What are the symptom-specific accommodations I can make?

The concussed brain must work harder and longer to process information. In general, allowing students to postpone assignments, projects and/or tests until they feel better will help keep the injury from adversely affecting achievement.⁶

When the student does feel well enough to resume coursework and/or attend school, certain accommodations can be made based on areas where he or she is having issues. These accommodations are outlined below.

What accommodations do most concussed students need?

- For those who feel well enough to take a test, extend test time to give the brain longer to process information.⁸

What if the student seems to be easily distracted?

- Break down assignments into small, manageable chunks that can be completed in a half hour or less. Then provide a break before moving onto the next task.³
- Issue short and concise written instructions or have the student write instructions down in a step-by-step sequence.⁶
- Allow the student to take tests in a separate, quiet room.⁶
- Move the student's seat to the front of the room so that he or she may be better observed and less easily distracted.¹
- Use color coding and/or highlighting to emphasize important information.³

What if the student has problems with sensitivity to light and/or noise?

- Move the student away from windows or dim the lights in the room.⁸
- Allow the student to wear sunglasses and/or a hat.^{3,8}
- Allow the student to avoid assemblies and to eat lunch in a location other than a loud cafeteria environment.³
- Encourage the student to avoid pep rallies, athletic events, school dances and other events where there may be loud noises and/or bright lights.

What if the student complains of memory problems?

- Provide class notes to the student or allow the use of a tape recorder for lectures.3
- Allow the use of fact sheets on tests to reduce the demand on memory.3
- Use multiple-choice and open-book tests (rather than short answer or essay) to minimize demand on memory.3
- Help the student devise ways to memorize information (mnemonic devices, association, rehearsal, repetition, etc.)

What if the student has difficulty with organizational skills and/or trouble being on time?

- Encourage and assist with the use of a planner to keep track of assignments, tests and due dates.3
- Use diagrams, time lines and charts to organize information and projects.3
- Use “to-do” lists and checklists.
- Check the student’s comprehension of directions or instructions and allow the student to restate the information in his or her own words.3