

## Sailing following a concussion

Sailing requires excellent spatial awareness, dynamic balance, visual tracking (for sail trim, other boats, and buoy markers), and rapid, complex cognitive decision-making. Symptoms like dizziness, fatigue, and impaired concentration can be dangerous on the water.

The return to sport pathway must be followed to ensure the gradual reintroduction of balance, cognitive load, and exposure to an unstable environment.

Earliest day post-injury	Notes	Activity
Day 8	Can start this stage even when still symptomatic but exercise should not significantly worsen symptoms.	<p><b>Focus on Fitness:</b> Gradual increase in self-directed exercise (rowing machine is highly relevant). Balance training on land (e.g., single-leg stance, walking heel-to-toe). Light resistance training for core stability.</p> <p><b>Sailing Specific Exercise:</b> Knot practice and navigation drills on land. Reviewing racing tactics or rules to re-engage cognitive function. NO time on the water yet.</p>
<b>R2P Doctor Assessment</b> to assess fitness to start a Gradual Return to Sport		
Day 15	Starting with stable, low-stress environments, and gradually building up complexity.	<p><b>Gradual Return to Sailing Training</b></p> <p><b>Initially:</b> Sailing as crew on a large, stable yacht in calm waters with a highly experienced skipper. Focus on simple tasks like straight-line trimming and steering in light wind. AVOID small dinghies, fast manoeuvres, and high-wind conditions.</p> <p><b>If remains well, progressing to:</b> Higher intensity auto-belay routes. Introduction of short, static traverse routes on a wall to test peripheral vision and balance.</p>
<b>R2P Doctor Assessment</b> to assess fitness to return to unrestricted sport		
Day 21	Only if symptom free at rest for the preceding 14 days AND symptom free during previous stage	<p><b>Return to competitive racing or sailing</b></p> <p>Return to competitive racing or sailing in higher wind/rougher conditions. Full engagement in high-speed, complex decision-making and dynamic boat movements.</p>