

When Physical Therapists are involved in **RETURN-TO-PLAY** Texans benefit in **two major ways**

Return-to-play determinations made by Physical Therapists:

#1

ENSURE SAFE TREATMENT BY A LICENSED PROVIDER

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 1.6 million to 3.8 million people experience sport related concussions (SRC) annually in the United States.
- Although written concussion management plans positively impact treatment outcomes, surveys showed that only 32% of principals and 62% of coaches in high schools provide post-concussion plans to injured athletes and their families.¹
- According to a *Pediatrics* study, specialists with experience in concussion management are needed to form an appropriate and effective return-to-play programs.¹
- Physical therapists are trained to examine the neurological, orthopedic, and cardiovascular systems of injured athletes in order to best prescribe an effective concussion treatment plan.

#2

DECREASE RECOVERY TIME AND RISK OF LATER INJURY

- It has been estimated that up to 40% of young concussed athletes return-to-play prematurely, with another study finding that 39% of concussed football athletes were playing with residual concussion symptoms.²
- Researchers have found that an SRC triples the risk of a later lower extremity musculoskeletal injury, and that return to play guidelines may not be sufficient to prevent later injury.³
- Athletes with prolonged symptoms due to an SRC benefit from treatment by physical therapists, who are licensed to evaluate coexisting problems and work towards symptom resolution and recovery.
- According to the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, the most effective post-concussion interventions include cervical and vestibular rehabilitation.⁴ Both rehabilitation techniques consist of exercise programs provided by physical therapists.

1 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2014.09.038>

2 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmr.2015.12.006>

3 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40279-016-0607-9>

4 <https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2016-097475>