

# Functional Medicine Concussion Recovery Protocol

## *Supporting Brain Healing After Concussion*

### Why this matters:

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury. Even if symptoms seem minor, the brain needs time, nutrients, and the right environment to heal. This plan supports brain recovery, reduces inflammation, and helps prevent long-term issues.

### 1. Immediate Priorities (First 1–2 Weeks)

- Rest, but don't over-rest: Sleep well, take short naps if needed. Avoid full bed rest all day—gentle walking is helpful once tolerated.
- Screen time break: Limit TV, phone, and computer use for the first several days, then gradually increase.
- Avoid alcohol and sedatives: These slow brain healing.
- Protect from repeat injury: No contact sports or risky activities until cleared.

### 2. Nutrition for Brain Repair

- Protein with every meal – builds neurotransmitters and supports healing.
- Colorful vegetables & berries – antioxidants reduce oxidative stress in brain tissue.
- Omega-3 fatty acids (EPA/DHA) – found in wild salmon, sardines, walnuts, or supplements. Shown to reduce neuroinflammation.
- Hydration: At least half your body weight in ounces of water daily.
- Avoid processed sugar & refined carbs – these worsen inflammation and blood sugar swings.

### 3. Lifestyle Foundations

- Sleep: Prioritize 8–9 hours nightly. Deep sleep is when brain repair (glymphatic system cleanup) happens.
- Gentle movement: Walking, stretching, or yoga as tolerated—supports cerebral blood flow.
- Stress management: Meditation, breathwork, or prayer lowers cortisol, which otherwise slows healing.
- Sunlight: 15–20 minutes daily helps regulate circadian rhythm and improves mood.



#### 4. Targeted Nutritional Support\*

(Always tailored individually—discuss dosing with your provider)

**Omega-3 (EPA/DHA) – 2–3 grams daily, divided doses, with meals.**

Anti-inflammatory brain fuel that supports neuron repair.

**Magnesium threonate or glycinate – 200–400 mg in the evening, with or without food.**

Helps calm the nervous system and supports neuroplasticity.

**Curcumin (bioavailable) – 500–1000 mg daily, with a fat-containing meal.**

Potent anti-inflammatory to reduce brain tissue swelling.

**Vitamin D3 + K2 – 2000–5000 IU D3 + 90–120 mcg K2 daily, with food in the morning.**

Supports immune regulation and brain healing.

**B-complex (B12, folate, B6) – Once daily in the morning, with or without food.**

Essential for neurotransmitter and myelin repair.

**N-acetylcysteine (NAC) – 600 mg 1–2x/day, on an empty stomach.**

Boosts glutathione and protects brain cells from oxidative stress.

**Creatine monohydrate – 3–5 g daily, with or without food.**

Improves brain energy metabolism and may reduce post-concussion fatigue.

#### 5. Cognitive & Neurological Rehabilitation

- Gradual return to cognitive tasks: Start with simple reading or puzzles, then build up.
- Brain training exercises: Apps like BrainHQ or Lumosity can help once symptoms stabilize.
- Vestibular/vision therapy: If dizziness or visual strain continues, specialized therapies may help.
- Light & sound sensitivity: Blue-light glasses, quiet environments, and gradual exposure support recovery.

## 6. When to Seek Medical Re-Evaluation

- Worsening headache, confusion, or memory loss
- Persistent vomiting or dizziness
- Seizures, weakness, or changes in speech/vision
- Symptoms lasting longer than 3–4 weeks despite supportive care

## 7. Long-Term Brain Health

- Continue a nutrient-dense diet , exercise, and stress management .
- Protect your head—avoid repeat concussions whenever possible.
- Consider ongoing cognitive training, omega-3 support, and periodic check-ins with your provider for brain health monitoring.

### **Bottom Line:**

Your brain has remarkable ability to heal—but it needs the right environment. Prioritize rest, whole foods, movement, and targeted nutrients to support full recovery.

