

Frequently Asked Questions - Early Concussion Assessment and Treatment (ECAT)

How will the program be delivered safely?

Back in Motion is considered a health care centre, and will follow all Provincial Health Officer Orders related to health care centres.

Following the recommendations of the Provincial Health Officer, masks are no longer required in our clinic. We respect each individual's choice in deciding whether or not to wear a mask. If you would like to wear a mask, we can provide you with one. Some of our health care professionals may also continue to wear masks. If you would like your health care professional to wear a mask during your treatment, please let us know.

If you are experiencing symptoms of the flu or have a fever, please let our team know and we would be happy to reschedule your appointment. Regular cleaning of assessment, treatment, and gym equipment will occur. Frequent handwashing is encouraged.

What is ECAT?

Early Concussion Assessment and Treatment (ECAT) is a multi-disciplinary service which consists of assessments and treatment for cognitive (thinking), physical, functional, or work-related difficulties that you may be experiencing as a result of your concussion.

You will initially receive an Intake Assessment with the Physical and Occupational Therapist, which will be completed over 1 to 2 appointments within 5 business days. After that, a treatment plan will be developed with you, to address your unique issues related to the concussion. Treatment typically occurs over a 4 week period, followed by a supported return to work (if available).

What is the purpose of ECAT?

The focus of ECAT is on education and reassurance in the early weeks following a concussion, as well as treatment to facilitate a safe and durable return to work. Intervention in the ECAT Program may include vestibular rehabilitation, physiotherapy treatment, as well as cognitive rehabilitation, occupational therapy treatment, and/or return to work services. Your treatment will be tailored to your individual needs. ECAT will provide you with strategies to better manage your symptoms, improve your cognitive (thinking) and physical function, and promote recovery from your concussion. The treatment team will work with you and others involved in your rehabilitation to find the best solution for a supported return to work.

Why would I be admitted to ECAT?

Your assessment team will discuss your specific circumstances with you. The following are reasons the ECAT Program is recommended:

- You have a work-related concussion that is affecting your ability to work, and you require supports to help you return to work



- OT/PT have assessed you, and recommended that you would benefit from ECAT services
- You are safe to participate in ECAT, and do not have any medical issues that would affect your health
- ECAT services will help to identify any difficulties related to your concussion, and will provide you with strategies to manage your symptoms and promote recovery

Why would I not be admitted to ECAT?

Your assessment team will discuss reasons with you, if you are not admitted to the ECAT Program. The following are examples of why you would not benefit from ECAT:

- You are already participating in another WorkSafeBC treatment program (e.g., PCMP) for the same injury
- You may meet or exceed your job demands and be ready to return to work
- You may have an underlying medical condition which would make it unsafe for you to participate in the program
- You may benefit from another form of treatment or medical investigation in relation to your injury
- You may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or experiencing acute psychotic symptoms
- You may be demonstrating unsafe behaviour, and we will work with you to provide suitable options

Who will be working with me in ECAT?

The Core ECAT team includes:

- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Physical Therapist (PT)

In addition to these core team members, a Kinesiologist (specialist in exercise physiology) may provide services. A Registered Clinical Counsellor may also be added to your team if you are experiencing some emotional changes from your injury.

The different team members will address different aspects of your concussion, and work together with you to make shared decisions about your rehabilitation goals and activities.

What will I be doing in ECAT?

Your ECAT Program will consist of some or all of the following components, based on your unique needs:



Intake Assessments

Intake Assessments will explore your current abilities in the following areas:

- Physical
- Functional
- Cognitive (thinking)
- Work-related

Following completion of the Intake Assessment, your treatment team will work with you to customize your ECAT Program to address your needs and circumstances, and create strategies and plans to support your return to work.

Rehabilitation Services

If unable to return to work following your Intake Assessment, Rehabilitation Services can include the following components:

- ECAT Treatment Block, which will involve PT/OT sessions, for exercises to address your injury, cognitive (thinking) activities, simulated work tasks, and education on the topics of concussion management, pacing, headaches, sleep, dizziness, and emotional management. Service schedule is 1.5 to 2 hour sessions, 3 days per week, for 4 weeks.
- Community Integration Sessions (where the team OT or PT meets you at your home or community) may be completed to help you resume day-to-day activities and establish routines to assist recovery

Return to Work Services

Return to Work Services include the following:

- Job Site Visit (JSV)
 - If appropriate, the OT may visit your worksite with you, to gain understanding of your job demands and work environment
- Gradual Return to Work (GRTW) Planning
 - OT will work with you and your employer to develop a GRTW Plan, if required
 - Plan will include specific tasks and duties that are within your abilities, with rest breaks, pacing strategies, and gradual progressions over time
 - The return to work goal will be discussed with you in advance; typically, the goal will be to return to your normal job duties and hours
- GRTW Implementation and Monitoring
 - You will be in regular contact with your OT, to review any difficulties or issues at work, problem solve solutions, and review self-management strategies
 - Your OT will communicate with your employer as needed, to make any revisions to the plan or duties/hours, depending on your progress



- Clinical OT, PT, Counselling Services
 - If required, you may receive additional PT, OT, and/or counselling supports to assist symptom management and develop additional strategies, during the return to work phase

Am I involved in decisions about my ECAT Program?

Yes, you are involved with decisions in your ECAT Program. You are the expert on the job you will return to, so we will work with you to figure out the best options for your return to work.

While there are timeframes and return to work expectations set by WorkSafeBC, we will work with you to provide support and alternatives.

You are invited to give feedback on the ECAT Program through individual meetings, suggestion boxes, and surveys.

How does the ECAT team communicate with my Family Doctor?

When you begin ECAT, your Family Doctor will receive a copy of all reports from the Program. After receiving the report, your Doctor will have an opportunity to communicate with us if they have any concerns about your participation in ECAT. When necessary, a member of your treatment team will communicate with your Doctor to update them on your progress, and ask any questions as needed. If any medical issues (not related to your injury) arise during the Program, a member of your treatment team will contact your Doctor.

What if my Doctor doesn't think I'm ready to go back to work?

Any return to work plans developed with you in ECAT will be sent to your Doctor. If there are any changes suggested by your Doctor, we will review that information, and communicate with your Doctor to ensure that we are working together. We will provide the support you need to return to work safely and successfully.

Will you talk to my employer?

The Occupational Therapist will speak with you regarding your work, and gain your consent to contact your employer. The Occupational Therapist will contact your employer to confirm job demands, explore return to work options and available supports at the workplace, and communicate recommendations from the ECAT Program.

Who gets a copy of my ECAT Reports?

The Intake, Progress, Discharge, Job Site Visit and Gradual Return to Work Plan Reports are sent to your WorkSafeBC Case Manager and Family Doctor. The GRTW Plan will also be shared with your employer.



At the completion of my ECAT Program, what decisions are made when I am discharged?

At the end of the ECAT Program, your team will discuss information about your functional abilities, as they relate to your job. There are 3 discharge status terms used when reporting back to WorkSafeBC about your ability to return to work:

- **Fit to Return to Work without Limitations:** You are ready to return to full pre-injury hours and duties, based on your functional abilities and objective findings.
- **Fit to Return to Work with Limitations:** You are ready to return to modified or alternate duties and/or hours, based on your functional abilities and objective findings.
- **Not Fit to Return to Work:** You may require further medical tests or intervention prior to a safe return to work.

Based on the information gathered during the ECAT Program, your treatment team will discuss next steps with you, such as further treatment or return to work.

How do I transition from the ECAT Program back to my workplace?

The Occupational Therapist will work with you, your employer, and your WSBC Case Manager to discuss return to work options, which may include developing a Graduated Return to Work Plan. This Plan will assist you in transitioning back to your pre-injury position. Your team will provide support for you during the return to work phase of the program, in the form of job site visits, one-to-one discussions with you over telephone, in clinic session, and/or written strategies. Your treatment team may also recommend other non-work related activities to improve your thinking and functional abilities, as you return to your daily routine.

Does Back in Motion work for WorkSafeBC?

No, Back in Motion is a private company providing rehabilitation services to a variety of organizations. Back in Motion has contracts with WorkSafeBC to deliver several programs. Our clinical opinions and recommendations are based on the observations and measurable findings of the treatment team. All of our staff members are employed by Back in Motion.