

What are routines and schedules?

- A schedule is a planned set of events that are done in a day.
 - For example: You might use a calendar to write out or type what you plan to do throughout the day.
- Routines are habits or steps needed to complete different parts of a schedule. They are usually done the same way each time.
 - For example: Doing the same things in the same order each morning like getting up at the same time, brushing your teeth, taking a shower, and then having breakfast.

Why are routines and schedules helpful after concussion or mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI)?

- There are many benefits to following a routine or schedule after concussion or mTBI. Routines and schedules can help people:
 - Remember what is happening and what comes next
 - Feel in control
 - Be organized and plan:
 - What needs to be done
 - When it needs to be done
 - Where it needs to be done
 - Choose healthy activities
 - Reduce stress and worry, which can increase symptoms
 - Decide what are the most important tasks to be done and what is the best time to do them
 - Feel a sense of purpose
 - Decrease stress and responsibilities on family members and others in their support system

How can I make a routine or schedule?

- To make a schedule and establish routines, try these steps:
 - First, think about what would be helpful to plan ahead. This might include things like:
 - Breaks and rest
 - Appointments and meetings
 - Work, school, and volunteering
 - Home care tasks like cleaning, laundry, and cooking
 - Hobbies and fun
 - Time with friends and family
 - Setting the same time to get up and go to bed every day
 - Exercise
 - Time to complete tasks for work or school
 - When to take medications



- Then, think about what tool you want to use to either write or type a schedule to easily see what needs to get done and when. Tools to use to write or type a schedule include:
 - Daily planners and calendars
 - Smart phone apps
 - Smart watches
 - Making lists
 - Smart home speaker assistants (like Amazon Alexa or Google Home)
 - Dry erase boards (large white boards you can write on)
 - Next, think about when you want to make your schedule. Here are some options for when to make a schedule:
 - Plan the night before for the next day.
 - Plan your day each morning.
 - Pick one day every week to plan for the next week. For example, every Sunday sit down and plan out your schedule for the next week.
 - Then, start to use your scheduling tool. Consider using the [Goal Setting](#) handout to help keep you on track and plan things that are important to you.
- Other tips to start and keep up with schedule and routines include:
 - Pick one place to put a schedule (like in a planner or a phone app) instead of keeping things in lots of different places.
 - Check your schedule often and change it as needed for balancing what you have to do, what you want to do, and what would be fun.
 - Give yourself more time than you think you will need to finish tasks. If you think something will take you 30 minutes, then give yourself 1 hour in your routine to finish. This can reduce the feeling of being rushed and overwhelmed.
 - Give yourself free periods of time at the end of the day to plan ahead for the next day.
 - Schedule smart. Plan activities for times when you feel your best and have fewer symptoms.
 - Be flexible. Sometimes things change and that is okay. Adjust as needed based on what is most important versus what can wait.

Additional Comments:

