

Breakthrough therapies helping athletes recover

By Kelly Bastone, Outdoor

In January 2013, 24-year-old Laura Fraser hit a tree while snowboarding at Fernie, British Columbia. Afterward, she felt a ringing in her ears that doctors attributed to a mild concussion, and within a few days she felt fine.

But then she had another, less traumatic fall in March 2014. That's when her life changed. Fraser became irritable, had difficulty concentrating, and experienced headaches that worsened with exertion. "It took me three times as long to do the things I used to do," she recalls. Her local Nova Scotia doctors told her to avoid anything that provoked symptoms, but she didn't recover. Instead, her mental focus became so poor that she had to drop out of school.

For decades, doctors have told concussed athletes like Fraser to rest, avoid bright lights, and limit activity. Having had one concussion places you at greater risk for another, they thought. But emerging science says that's bunk: You can recover from a concussion, with active treatments that recondition the injured parts of your brain.

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