

# Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

## C.J. Stroud

### Press Conference



C.J. STROUD: I feel like everything that happened I don't want to say happened for a reason, but it was kind of something that I guess God wanted me to go through. It was tough. It wasn't easy, but my teammates held it down as best as they could, and I appreciate them for that. Now I'm back, and I'm happy to be here, and I'm happy to just do my job again.

**Q. Have you officially been cleared?**

C.J. STROUD: Yes, I have.

**Q. Two things. One, do you plan to start on Sunday?**

C.J. STROUD: Yes.

**Q. You were out for a couple of weeks. It seems like it was a pretty serious injury. Was it scary? Is there any time where you were worried?**

C.J. STROUD: I wouldn't say it was scary. It was just the right precautions and the right steps I had to take to see progress. It wasn't overnight. The thing about concussions that I have learned is that it's not a one-size-fits-all all whatever the situation is. For me it was a little different than others.

It was just unique to what I went through on the field. The training staff did a great job of just making sure that I was okay and wasn't forcing it and trying to come back too fast. I appreciate them for just being honest throughout the whole process and everything.

Yeah, it was tough, but we're through it now, and I'm excited to play.

**Q. How do you feel?**

C.J. STROUD: I feel great. I feel really good. I feel back to myself, which was the biggest thing.

**Q. Where did you watch the game?**

C.J. STROUD: Kind of right when the Tennessee game was played, I got to -- that was my first time watching football since my injury just because the camera angles and all that stuff was weird with my vision. Tennessee was around where I started feeling better, so I watched the game at home. Then I watched the Cleveland game at home too. I got to watch both the games.

**Q. What was that like -- (off microphone)?**

C.J. STROUD: It is what it is type of thing. It wasn't something I was, like, I'm not -- I wasn't mad at the world or mad at anybody or mad at God. I was, like, man, it's something I have to go through and I have to fight through another piece of adversity that I'm faced with. How am I going to react?

I didn't try to get too up, too down. I was trying to be supportive of my teammates. I was texting them throughout the week, and I was keeping up with the game plans and stuff. It was tough to watch because, of course, I wanted to play, but at the end of the day there was nothing I could do, so I wasn't going to try to control something I couldn't control and just get mad. So I just tried to stay calm.

**Q. Have you ever been through anything like this in your career before?**

C.J. STROUD: Injury is a part of the game. I feel like concussions are a little different. I've had concussions before, but this one was probably the worst one I've had just because I hit the back of my head, and I hit the ground really hard.

That was what made it so bad. I damn near hit my head on cement kind of. It was cold, and the turf I guess isn't the best I've learned. It is what it is, and I'm just happy to be back.

**Q. You got hit a lot before your concussion. Does having this time off helped your body?**

C.J. STROUD: I feel like any time off -- this is the most I've actually not done anything physical all year. I mean, from



August of 2022 preparing for my season with Ohio State, I haven't stopped since then. So I've had a week or two break since that time before fall camp in college.

Yeah, it was good for me to kind of catch up and let my shoulder rest a little bit and other little nicks and pains that I had, so it definitely helped.

**Q. The team held it down for you. What's it like for you knowing you have an opportunity to come back and you have a real shot achieving those goals?**

C.J. STROUD: I feel like it's cool just to see your teammates go out there and get at their perspective because my perspective has always been from the sideline or in the game. So I got to actually see some things that we can work on from a visual standpoint on a TV level. Not like trying to look cool or nothing, but just trying to control our emotions better, things like that.

I feel like just that perspective of the game definitely helped, and I feel like, man, we're right where we're at. We've got to appreciate the work that we've put in, but at the same time just get one at a time and keep building for hopefully making the playoffs. That's definitely the goal and go from there.

We have to start with Tennessee, who is a really hard challenge. You can see last time we played them, they played us really tough. Mike Vrabel does a great job of mixing up the defense and things like that. Definitely I feel like we're at where we're at for a reason, and we have to just keep going.

**Q. Was there anyone that you leaned on for help or support while you were going through this?**

C.J. STROUD: Yeah, my mom was really big in my recovery just checking on me, making sure I was all right. Then just really my support staff of outside this building, of my friend Caleb, my agent, my marketing guy, my close family members that helped me, my brother, my sister.

I was able to honestly kind of let go of a lot of responsibilities with their help, and that helped me tremendously of just focusing on my recovery and my health, which is most important.

I really felt love while I was out by people just reaching out and making sure I was all right. I appreciated that a lot. I know that it looks scary and the whole situation was weird, but I appreciate people actually caring. The people who support me every day, I appreciate them a lot.

**Q. What was it like the first time you got back into the**

**huddle with your guys and to be there and do everything they were doing?**

C.J. STROUD: It was cool. It was right back like -- yesterday and today it felt like I didn't miss at all. It felt like my groove kind of got back. I think Jerrod has done a good job of getting me back in my rhythm and getting my timing and stuff down for this week's prep. I feel like he has done a good job of putting me in live game situations.

I think hopefully I will come back and do as well or as better as I've been doing. That's the plan, and I hope that that comes true. Excited for those next couple of games and this opportunity.

God bless.

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