

COVID-19 Return to Activity Recommendations:

Information for Athletes and Families

While the long-term health effects of COVID-19 are still unknown, there is emerging evidence that there may be some risk associated with returning to exercise too soon after contracting COVID-19, particularly in those that experience symptoms associated with the virus. The general consensus is for all individuals that have tested positive for COVID-19 to follow a gradual return to activity process, similar to a return from a concussion (see second page). There is also agreement for getting clearance by a medical provider that may include testing of the heart and lungs prior to starting a return to activity progression.

The following are recommendations for return to activity:

COVID-19 POSITIVE TEST, NO SYMPTOMS:

1. Rest/no exercise for 14 days from positive test.
2. Receive clearance from medical provider to start return to activity stages.
3. Complete gradual return to activity program as outlined on page 2.

COVID-19 POSITIVE TEST WITH SYMPTOMS:

While experiencing symptoms:

1. Rest/recovery with no exercise
2. Talk to your doctor about further cardiac testing at this time.

After symptoms have resolved:

1. 14 days of rest without exercise.
2. Receive clearance from medical provider to start return to activity stages. (Cardiac screening strongly recommended before clearance.)
3. Follow medical provider recommendations for return to activity, including a gradual return to activity program as outlined on page 2.

It is important for athletes to monitor fatigue levels and listen to their bodies when resuming activity. Though they may progress through the stages of their return to activity program without symptoms, they may still be deconditioned and need more time to get back to their prior level of performance.

COVID-19 Return to Activity Guidelines

It is important for all athletes to complete a gradual return to activity to insure there are no continuing symptoms, heart, or lung issues with activity. The following is a recommended return to activity program to ensure the athlete is ready to return:

STAGE 1 (14 days minimum):

Rest period. Athlete will rest for a minimum of 14 days during this stage. Athlete may continue with walking and activities of daily living during this stage, but will refrain from any exercise or sport activities. **Athlete must be symptom free for 14 days before progressing to Stage 2.**

STAGE 2 (2 days minimum):

Light activity. Athlete may start some light exercise activity, such as walking, light jogging, or stationary bike. There is to be no resistance training at this stage. Athletes want to keep their heart rate at less than 70% max and should keep the duration of activity to 15 minutes or less.

STAGE 3A (1 day minimum):

Frequency of training increases. Athlete may start simple movement activities like running drills. Athletes want to keep their heart rate at less than 80% max and should keep the duration of activity to 30 minutes or less. Athletes want to increase load gradually and manage fatigue symptoms.

STAGE 3B (1 day minimum):

Duration of training increases. Athlete may progress to more complex training activities. Athletes want to keep their heart rate at less than 80% max and should keep the duration of activity 45 minutes or less. Athletes should work on exercise coordination and skills/tactics.

STAGE 4 (2 days minimum):

Intensity of training increases. Athletes may start to return to normal training activities. Athletes are to keep their heart rate at less the 80% mas and should keep the duration of activity to 60 minutes or less. Athletes should use this stage to restore confidence for participation and assess their functional skills.

STAGE 5 (earliest start date is day 21):

Resume normal training. Athletes may return to full training/practice. There are no restrictions on heart rate or duration.

STAGE 6 (earliest start date is day 22):

Return to competition. Athletes are now able to return to full competition. Athletes can now participate in games/matches.

Note: Progression is individualized and will be determined on a case by case basis. Factors that may affect the rate of progression include: underlying health conditions, age of the athlete, and sport/activity in which the athlete participates.