

# ATHLETES & COVID-19



## HOW TO RETURN TO PLAY SAFELY FOLLOWING COVID-19 INFECTION



After COVID-19 infection, your student-athlete's health care provider will help determine when it is safe to begin a graduated return to play progression based on their medical history, symptoms, severity of illness and previous level of activity.

A graduated return to play progression will increase your athlete's activity level and allow you to monitor any lingering symptoms of COVID-19 infection.

Your athlete may begin Step 1 of the following return to play progression once they are able to complete activities of daily living (i.e. walking around the house, dressing, daily hygiene tasks, etc) without worsening of symptoms **and has been cleared by a healthcare provider for exercise, sports, or other activities.**

### PHASING PROCESS FOR RETURN TO PLAY:

- **STEP 1:** Two days minimum of light aerobic activity (up to 70% maximum heart rate) for up to 15 minutes. Sessions should be at least 24 hours apart. Activities may include brisk walking, light jogging, or using a stationary bike. No strength training.
- **STEP 2:** One day minimum of aerobic exercise (up to 80% maximum heart rate) for up to 30 minutes. Simple movement activities such as running drills may be added to increase level of difficulty. No strength training.
- **STEP 3:** One day minimum of exercise (up to 80% maximum heart rate) for up to 45 minutes. May add some simple sport-specific activities and strength training to increase level of difficulty.
- **STEP 4:** Two days minimum of sport-specific training (up to 80% maximum heart rate for up to 60 minutes. Sessions must be at least 24 hours apart.
- **STEP 5:** One day minimum. Resume normal training activities and duration.
- **STEP 6:** Return to competition with no restrictions.

### THROUGHOUT EACH STEP, MONITOR YOUR ATHLETE FOR THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

- Dizziness
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain/pressure
- Decreased exercise tolerance
- Fainting

If your student-athlete experiences any of these or other alarming symptoms, discontinue activity, halt progression, and return to his or her healthcare provider for further evaluation. The symptoms or return to play protocol are subject to change pending updates in guidelines and recommendations of COVID-19.

**IF YOU DON'T HAVE A PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN, CONTACT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING PROVIDERS TO BE EVALUATED FOR READINESS TO RETURN TO PLAY**

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