

Providence Sports Medicine seeks to provide a safe return to activity for all athletes following any injury or illness. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, guidelines have been developed to aid in ensuring that athletes who have contracted COVID-19 are identified, treated and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up medical care and are fully recovered prior to returning to activity.

Management of COVID-19 (novel corona virus) continues to evolve as we learn more about the effects of the virus on the recovered individual. There is evidence that COVID-19 may have lasting effects on heart and lung functions that may be worsened by beginning an exercise program too soon during recovery. The recommendations outlined in the document represent current best practice at time of publication for return to play following a COVID-19 diagnosis. The main recommendations are listed below:

1. 14 day rest period after any symptoms have resolved.
2. Undergo cardiac screening recommended by your healthcare provider.
3. No symptoms with daily activities.
4. Able to walk at least 500 meters (about 6 city blocks) without symptoms.
5. Undergo a gradual return to play protocol as outlined in these recommendations.

### **Recognize COVID-19**

The following symptoms should be checked each day prior to activity. Any athlete who is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 shall be immediately removed from the contest or practice (“activity”) and referred to a health care professional. Contact tracing will be done in order to determine other’s exposure and risk. The athlete shall not return to team activity until cleared by an appropriately trained health care professional.

SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19	
Cough not associated with allergies	Fever – Greater than 100.3 F
Diarrhea, Nausea, Vomiting or other GI Illness	Muscle Pain/Acute generalized pain
Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing	Sore throat
Acute fatigue and sudden onset of discomfort or illness	New loss of taste or smell
Congestion or Runny Nose	Headache

## **Remove from Activity:**

### **Guidelines for Parents and Coaches:**

Any athlete who reports any COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to practice/play. The athlete should be sent home and referred to a health care provider and get clearance before returning to the team. All athletes shall be screened daily before going to their practice facility or school, entering the field, gym or practice location.

### **Guidelines for Certified Athletic trainers:**

If any athlete reports any COVID-19 symptoms to the athletic trainer, the athletic trainer will remove the athlete and send them home with a referral to a health care provider and get clearance before returning to the team. All athletes should be screened before entering the athletic training room.

## **Return to Activity**

### **Return-to-Participation (RTP) Recommendations after positive COVID-19**

Return to physical activity and full team participation is a medical decision. The athlete should meet the following criteria in order to progress to initial physical activity:

1. Athlete must have 14 days of rest from onset of virus if asymptomatic OR
2. Athlete must be at least 14 days symptom free.
3. Athlete must have clearance from a health care provider to resume activity and undergone appropriate cardiac testing if recommended by their health care provider.
4. Athlete must be symptom free with daily activities and also able to walk 500 meter (6 blocks) without symptoms.

The athlete must meet all of the following criteria in order to return to full team participation:

1. Complete a graded Return-to-Participation progression as outlined below.
2. Exhibit no symptoms associated with COVID-19.
3. Obtains written clearance from an approved health care professional.

### **Providence Graded Return-to Participation Recommendations**

The athlete will spend the required number of days in each stage of the return to play. If the athlete starts to experience symptoms following a workout, they will return to the prior stage on the following day. There are 6 stages to complete for a return to participation, with a minimum of 20 days from COVID-19 diagnosis COVID-19 and full return to participation.

#### **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.*

The Providence COVID-19 management guidelines will update as current research and standards of best practice evolve.

*I have read and understand the above Providence Sports Medicine recommendations for COVID-19*

School Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Athletic Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Athletic trainer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_