

# Xavier High School

## Return to Athletics following COVID-19 Illness or Exposure

12/7/2020

As we continue learning about the residual effects of COVID-19, one potential concern for athletes is the effects of the virus on the heart. Preliminary research and several case studies have indicated that following contracting COVID-19 a small percentage of athletes suffer from heart inflammation or swelling called myocarditis. While this appears to be rare and temporary, it can lead to catastrophic results if strenuous exercise is performed before this condition has resolved. With WIAA recommendation, Ascension Sports Medicine Wisconsin and the St. Francis Xavier Catholic School System have developed the following procedures. These procedures will be implemented prior to returning to full competition for those student-athletes that have tested positive or been exposed to COVID-19.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include: Fever greater than 100.5° F, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, muscle or body aches, headache, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat or loss of taste or smell.

This document outlines the procedures for **3 separate COVID-19 possibilities:**

- A.** Positive COVID-19 test or COVID-19 symptoms in an untested athlete (minimum of 10 days of isolation required returning to school on day 11\*)
- B.** Direct Exposure to someone with COVID-19 with or without a negative test (14 days of quarantine required, returning to school on day 15\*)
- C.** COVID-19 type symptoms but no direct exposure and a negative test

\*Each day of isolation or quarantine is a full 24 hours meaning isolation/quarantine does not end 10 or 14 days exactly from the start of symptoms, but instead, isolation or quarantine ends at the start of the next day. The first day of exposure, symptoms or date of the positive test is counted as day 0. Because of the nature of the COVID-19 virus, time from exposure to symptoms could range anywhere between 2 to 14 days thus the necessity of quarantining a full 14 days versus 10 days of isolation for an individual who has already developed symptoms or tests positive.

### **A. Positive COVID-19 test or COVID19 symptoms in a untested athlete:**

Per current district guidelines, should a student-athlete test positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 but not get tested (assumed COVID-19 positive), they will be required to remain in isolation for a minimum of 10 days. Following isolation the student-athlete may return to school on the 11th day from the onset of symptoms or from the date of a positive test.

**Steps for Returning to Athletics After Testing Positive for COVID-19 or assumed COVID-19 positive :**

1. **WIAA Graduated Return to Play Checklist for a Positive Case of COVID-19** form must be completed by a qualified medical provider (MD, DO, PA, NP) and given to your Licensed Athletic Trainer or Athletic Director. This form will provide the guidelines and timeline for your return to play.

<https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/Covid/WIAA-Positive-Graduated-Return-Cklst.pdf>

**It is recommended that you contact your provider's office via phone or email 7 days prior to the end of your scheduled isolation time to begin the discussion regarding your return to athletics and share the WIAA's form with them.**

Based upon your symptoms, findings of any additional cardiac testing, hospitalization and/or severity of the infection, your provider may delay a return to full activity as indicated on the **WIAA Graduated Return to Play Checklist for a Positive Case of COVID-19** form.

2. **If indicated by the medical provider**, the athlete will follow a standardized, gradual return to activity plan.
  - a. The return to play protocol will begin once the athlete has returned to school. The return to play protocol will last 6 days with the athlete being cleared to play on day 7.
  - b. The return to play protocol will include a symptom checklist that will need to be completed daily by the athlete.
  - c. For athletes with mild or moderate symptoms, your provider may perform an EKG or additional cardiac testing. Should the athlete demonstrate any abnormalities on the EKG or other cardiac tests, referral to a cardiologist would be warranted.
  - d. Athletes with severe symptoms (hospitalization, abnormal cardiac testing, multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children) myocarditis return to play guidelines should be followed. These could include EKG testing, echocardiogram, 24 hour Holter monitor, exercise stress test and/or cardiac MRI. Exercise in these athletes will be restricted for 3 to 6 months.
3. **May return to play only upon completion of**
  - a. Medical Clearance by your provider\*
  - b. Completion of WIAA return to play protocol (If deemed necessary by your provider) and supervised by the school athletic trainer.

**Graduated Return to Play (RTP) Progression After COVID-19 Infection<sup>1</sup>:**

Participants who have had mild or moderate symptoms with COVID-19 **and** obtained provider clearance and recommendation, the athlete must complete the progression below without development of chest pain, chest tightness, palpitations (noticeable rapid heart rate), lightheadedness, pre-syncope (feeling like going to faint), or syncope (fainting). If these symptoms develop, the participant should be referred back to the evaluating provider who signed the form.

- **Stage 1:** (2 Days Minimum) Light Activity (Walking, Jogging, Stationary Bike) for 15 minutes, or less, at intensity no greater than 70% of maximum heart rate. NO resistance training.
- **Stage 2:** (1 Day Minimum) Add simple movement activities (EG. running drills) for 30 minutes, or less, at intensity no greater than 80% of maximum heart rate
- **Stage 3:** (1 Day Minimum) Progress to more complex training for 45 minutes, or less, at intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate. May add light resistance training.
- **Stage 4:** (2 Days Minimum) Normal Training Activity for 60 minutes, or less, at intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate
  - Day one/stage 4 must completed at school under the observation of the LAT
  - Day Two/stage 4 will be completed with their team in a practice setting **not** in a game or competition setting
- **Stage 5:** Return to full activity

1. RTP Procedure adapted from Elliott N, et al. Infographic. British Journal of Sports Medicine, 2020 and the WIAA website

## **B. Direct Exposure to someone with COVID-19 with or without a negative test:**

Following a direct exposure to an individual who tests positive for COVID-19, student athletes will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Even the most dedicated athletes who have remained symptom free and have continued to work out on their own during this time will need additional time to acclimate their bodies to the stresses of their specific sport. Following 14 days of quarantine, a significant decrease in conditioning will have occurred. The expectation that returning to full competition immediately following 14 days away from practice could place the athlete at risk for a variety of injuries.

1. For those athletes who are quarantined for COVID-19 because of a direct exposure **but test negative or are exposed but fail to get a test** for the virus the following guidelines will be implemented:
  - a. As long as they remain symptom free, athletes who are quarantined due to exposure should continue to work out at home, on their own, under the guidance of their coach and the school's athletic trainer.
  - b. Should you begin to experience symptoms at any time during your quarantine, discontinue any workouts and contact your provider.
2. Once deemed exposed, an athlete must remain quarantined for the duration of the 14 days. Secondary to the nature of the virus and infectious period, a negative test or series of negative tests does not allow you to return early. **(You cannot test out of quarantine).**

## **C. COVID-19 type symptoms but no direct exposure and a negative test\***

Should an athlete present to school, practice or the athletic training room with COVID-19 symptoms the following procedures will be followed:

1. We must assume that any athlete who presents with symptoms of COVID-19 is COVID positive until they are medically cleared.
  - a. If during school hours: the student athlete will be sent to the school office who will contact the parents or guardian.

- b. If after school: the athlete will be sent home and the parents or guardians will be asked to withhold the student athlete from school the next day and contact the school for guidance on next steps.
2. If the student athlete's symptoms are consistent with possible COVID-19, the school will recommend the family contact their medical provider and obtain a COVID-19 test.
  - a. If the COVID-19 test returns negative, the athlete will be allowed to return to school and practice once their symptoms have resolved per the districts return to school guidelines. Student-athlete has a cold/flu versus COVID-19.
  - b. Documentation of a negative test will need to be provided.
3. Should the test come back positive, the 10 day isolation process will begin.
  - a. The school district's policy will determine isolation timeline.
  - b. Returning to athletics will follow the return to play progression outlined above.

We currently live in very uncertain times. Returning to athletics will be one step in getting us closer to our new normal. As we learn more about COVID-19 our procedures will continue to evolve but for now, based upon the research and evidence we have, the above will be in place in order to keep everyone as safe as possible as we return to high school athletics. **Please understand that things change rapidly and we may need to modify or enhance these steps as needed in the future.**

Should you have any questions, please contact your school's Licensed Athletic Trainer.

Becky Oszman, LAT  
(608) 566-9842  
Rebecca.Oszman@ascension.org