

St. Louis Metropolitan Area Sports Resocialization Task Force: Returning to Play Post COVID-19 Infection

Athlete with COVID-19 Positive Test within the last 6 months¹

Minimum of 14 days since symptoms onset or last exposure without participation in sports or any exercise

-AND-

Symptoms have resolved or was asymptomatic, no fever (≥ 100.4) for 24 hours without fever reducing medications, improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath)

Medical evaluation by primary care clinician⁺

Screening questions to assess for concerning symptoms of myocarditis or myocardial ischemia⁺⁺

⁺Medical providers should take into consideration the intensity level of sport participation and exercise to help guide their decision to pursue additional evaluation.

⁺⁺**Adapted from the American Heart Association Pre-Screening of Competitive Athlete Recommendations²**

- Chest pain/tightness with exercise
- Syncope/near syncope that is unexplained
- Unexplained or excessive dyspnea/fatigue with exertion
- New Palpitations
- Heart murmur on exam



Positive Screen questions or previously Hospitalized Patient

Further work-up as indicated by primary care clinician (i.e. Chest X-ray, Spirometry, PFTs, Chest CT, Cardiology Consult)

Negative Screen

*****Return to Play*****

Gradual reintroduction of physical activity with understanding athlete is likely deconditioned after 2 weeks off while monitoring for any signs of respiratory or cardiac symptoms that may develop with exercise

Worsening or ongoing concerning symptoms, (chest pain, chest tightness, palpitations, lightheadedness, pre-syncope or syncope)
- OR -
Exercise related symptoms after 4-6 weeks after returning to play

Return to Play (RTP) Procedures After COVID-19 Infection

Stage 1:

(2 Day 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 Day Minimum)

Normal Training Activity for 60 minutes or less at intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate

Stage 5:

Return to full activity

1. Adaptions from: Phelan, Dermot, Jonathan H. Kim, and Eugene H. Chung. "A game plan for the resumption of sport and exercise after coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infection." JAMA cardiology (2020).

2. Adaptions from: Maron BJ, Thompson PD, Puffer JC, et al. Cardiovascular pre-participation screening of competitive athletes. A statement for health professionals from the Sudden Death Committee (clinical cardiology) and Congenital Cardiac Defects Committee (cardiovascular disease in the young), American Heart Association. Circulation.1996;94:850-856.