



## COVID-19 Student-Athlete Return to Participation Guidelines (Includes Spirit & Marching Band)

As of September 3, 2021

### 1. Students who test positive for COVID-19:

- A. Student should follow county health department/local school district quarantine/isolation guidelines.
- B. Student should obtain written clearance from their healthcare provider through an in-person health exam prior to returning to participation in a school sports, spirit or marching band program.

#### **Asymptomatic students or students with mild symptoms:**

- Mild symptoms are defined as common cold-like symptoms, GI symptoms or loss of taste/smell; generally without fever or fever < 2 days.
- Once symptoms improve the student may resume normal activities of daily living while in isolation and walk for light exercise provided symptoms continue to improve.
- Check-in with healthcare provider (MD, DO, DC, PA-C or APRN) before beginning any exercise program.
- No specific cardiac testing is recommended unless there is a specific clinical concern.
- Student may begin an individualized progressive exercise program\* when at least 3-5 days removed from symptom onset or a positive test in the case of someone who remains asymptomatic.

#### **Students with moderate symptoms or cardiopulmonary symptoms:**

- Moderate symptoms are defined as fever > 100.4, chills, severe cough, or flu-like syndrome for 2 or more days
- Cardiopulmonary symptoms are defined as chest pain, dyspnea or palpitations
- The student should be evaluated by a MD or DO. Additional cardiac testing may be considered.
- Student should be at least 5-7 days from symptom onset and moderate symptoms should be resolved before beginning an individualized progressive exercise program\*.

#### **Students who experience cardiopulmonary symptoms (exertional chest pain, excessive dyspnea, syncope, palpitations or unexplained exercise intolerance) with a return to exercise:**

- The student should be re-evaluated by a MD or DO as additional cardiac testing should be considered, including cardiologist referral.

#### **\*Return to sport/activity exercise progression:**

The student's healthcare provider, school medical personnel, coaches and administrators are all responsible to ensure every student is both physically and emotionally prepared for a safe return to competition. Every situation and student is unique. Factors such as baseline fitness, infection severity, duration of COVID-19 symptoms and tolerance to progressive levels of exercise must all be considered. Most students will require at least a few days of a progressive exercise program (see following example). It is also recommended students participate in some full team practices before returning to formal competition for coaches to assess the student's overall physical conditioning status and the student's readiness for competition.



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### Progressive exercise program example:

- Stage 1 (2 days minimum): Light activity (walking, jogging, stationary bike) for 15 minutes or less at an intensity no greater than 70% maximum heart rate. No resistance training.
- Stage 2 (1 day minimum): Add simple movement activities (e.g., running drills) for 30 minutes or less at an 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 an intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate.
- Stage 5: Return to full activity.

For less physically intense activities such as Bowling and Golf, healthcare providers may choose to modify the length and intensity of this protocol.

### 2. Students who are asymptomatic and determined to be a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case:

- A. KSHSAA recommends quarantine with duration based on current county health department/school district guidelines. A student's vaccination status could determine whether or not they are required to quarantine after a close contact exposure.
- B. While in home quarantine, students should be aware of any emerging symptoms and contact their healthcare provider.
- C. During the first 2-3 days of home quarantine, students should refrain from intense physical activity. If the student remains symptom free and has no other underlying medical conditions, they may begin to resume physical activity on their own while in home quarantine to maintain a healthy level of physical conditioning. It is also recommended students participate in some full team practices before returning to formal competition for coaches to assess the student's overall physical conditioning status and the student's readiness for competition.

### **Additional Information:**

All preseason practice requirements must be fulfilled. If a sport is interrupted prior to the first competition or an athlete is forced to isolate or quarantine, the preseason practice schedule should resume at the point of interruption when the sport or athlete is permitted to return to activity.

### **References**

Drezner JA, Heinz WM, Asif IM, Batten CG, Fields KB, Raukar NP, Valentine VD, Walter KD, Baggish AL. Cardiopulmonary considerations for high school student-athletes during the COVID19 pandemic: Update to the NFHS-AMSSM guidance statement. August 2021.

"COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Return to Sports". *American Academy of Pediatrics*, <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-interim-guidance-return-to-sports/>. Accessed 8/15/2021.

Elliott, N., Martin, R., Heron, N., Elliott, J., Grimstead, D., & Biswas, A. (2020). Infographic. Graduated return to play guidance following COVID-19 infection. *British journal of sports medicine*, bjsports-2020-102637. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2020-102637>