

## Slow Return to Play Phases

After COVID-19 infection, your athlete's health care provider will help determine when it is safe to begin a graduated or a slow 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 young athlete's activity level and allow you to monitor any lingering symptoms of COVID-19 infection.

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

THROUGHOUT EACH PHASE, MONITOR YOUR ATHLETE FOR THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

- Dizziness
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain/pressure
- Decreased exercise tolerance
- Fainting or feeling you're going to faint

If your athlete experiences any of these symptoms, discontinue activity and return to their health care provider for further evaluation.

### Phasing Process for Return to Sport

**Phase 1 (Day 1 and 2 – 2 days minimum):** at least two sessions of light aerobic activity (up to 70 percent [maximum heart rate](#)) for up to 15 minutes. Sessions should be at least 24 hours apart. Activities may include brisk walking, light jogging or use of a stationary bike. No strength or resistance training permitted.

**Phase 2 (Day 3 – 1 day minimum):** at least one session of aerobic exercise (up to 80 percent [maximum heart rate](#)) for up to 30 minutes. Simple movement activities (running drills) may be added to increase difficulty. No strength or resistance training permitted.

**Phase 3 (Day 4 – 1 day minimum):** at least one session of exercise (up to 80 percent [maximum heart rate](#)) for up to 45 minutes. May add simple sports-specific activities and/or light strength/resistance training to increase level of difficulty.

**Phase 4 (Days 5 and 6 – 2 days minimum):** at least two separate sessions of sports-specific training (up to 80 percent [maximum heart rate](#)) for up to 60 minutes. Sessions must be at least 24 hours apart. Sessions may include normal team training – coordinate with your team's coach accordingly.

**Phase 5 (Day 7 – 1 day minimum):** resume normal training activities and duration for at least one session.

**Phase 6:** return to competition with no restrictions.

Reference: Elliott N, Martin R, Heron N, et al Infographic. Graduated return to play guidance following COVID-19 infection *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2020;54:1174-1175. [Article](#) and [Infographic](#)