



COVID-19 RETURN-TO-SPORTS CONSIDERATIONS FOR ATHLETIC TRAINERS & ADMINISTRATORS - TAAC 501

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COVID-19 RETURN TO SPORT CONSIDERATIONS

- How did we get here?
- 6 Months of changing mindset & operations
- Administrators
- Athletic Trainers
- Coaches



COVID-19 RETURN TO SPORT CONSIDERATIONS

- Importance of collaboration
- Administrators, Athletic Trainers, School Nurses, Public Health
- Opportunity to highlight skillset, show value, increase worth
- Potential to uncover areas of improvement
 - (Human capital, P&P, Operations)



COVID-19 RETURN TO SPORT CONSIDERATIONS

- Key Areas of Consideration
 - Administrative Concerns
 - Physical Activity Concerns
 - Risk Mitigation Strategies



ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

- Establish a COVID-19 Response Team
- Review and Update School Communicable Disease Policy
- Establish Pre-Participation Physical Exam Requirements
- Assess Supply and Equipment Needs in Response to COVID-19



ESTABLISH A COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM

- Coordinate with district and school health services
- Athletic Trainers, Supervising Physicians, Athletic Directors, School Nurses, Public Health Official
- Identify and implement policies and procedures for return-to-sport
- Work seamlessly with campus based health teams



REVIEW & UPDATE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

- COVID-19 - reporting, screening, positive tests, contact tracing
- Communication strategies for updates with AD, coaches, student athletes, parents, or public health officials
- AD, AT, Coaches collaborate to improve S&C, practices, competitions, athletic health care, etc. in response to COVID-19



REVIEW & UPDATE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

- Develop strategies & resources to promote wellness, safety, hygiene among staff & students
 - Display standard daily precautions & promote health habits for students & staff
 - Discouraged shared personal equipment (clothing, towels, grooming tools, etc)
 - Develop & provide infectious disease prevention education for coaches, parents, & student athletes.



ESTABLISH PRE-PARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EXAM REQUIREMENTS

- At minimum, maintain UIL compliance (avoid mass physical events)
- Consider your local supply & demand of health care providers
- Reduce strain on PCPs and clinics during this time.
- Consider ALL new athletes & those with pre-existing illness, injury, or history of COVID-19



ASSESS SUPPLY & EQUIPMENT NEEDS

- Take stock of current inventory of PPE, cleaning, & sanitation supplies
 - Gloves, masks, cleaning & sanitation (work with custodial services)
- Assess logistics of obtaining necessary supplies & equipment
 - Supply chain concerns
 - Access to funding & deficit concerns
 - Availability, process, & timeline for equipment reconditioning



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CONCERNS

- Prepare Athletes for Return to Physical Activity
- Heat Acclimatization Concerns
- Condensed or Expanded Pre-Season Considerations
- Conditioning and Practice Session Concerns



PREPARE ATHLETES FOR RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Identify & prepare for detraining concerns in student athletes
 - Allow for retraining period as opposed to immediate return
 - Ensure adequate progression & training in preparation phase
 - Ensure appropriate progression of sports-specific activities once practices are initiated



HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION CONCERNS

- Consider detraining effects on acclimatization
- Anticipate changes in normal periodization schedule that may affect acclimatization
- Update or establish acclimatization procedures based on heat & equipment concerns



CONDENSED OR EXPANDED PRESEASON CONSIDERATIONS

- AD, Athletic Trainers, & Coaches should collaborate to plan & prepare for a progression structure related to:
 - Length of preseason, duration of practices, number of overall practices, equipment worn, & location
 - Addressing likelihood of increased number of injuries after layoff



CONDITIONING & PRACTICE SESSION CONCERNS

- Requirement of pre-work out screenings (signs, symptoms, temps)
- Limitations on size of groups or gatherings
- Face coverings - when to require
- Enhanced facilities cleaning requirements
- Revised hydration strategies (hands-free, RTDs, etc)



RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- Prepare the Facilities
- Illness Reporting
- Promote Wellness & Hygiene
- Review Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)



PREPARE THE FACILITIES

- Facilities Principles Document (BOC) - Athletic Training Rooms
- Enforce social distancing when applicable
- Event tickets & crowd control
- Ensure functional showers
- Review & update cleaning & sanitation policies (AT facility, locker rooms, weight rooms, hydration stations, laundry, shared equipment)



ILLNESS REPORTING

- Follow established protocols on reporting communicable disease & illness
- Collaborate with school health services as outlined in policy
- Encourage those who feel sick to stay home & follow up with appropriate medical provider



PROMOTE WELLNESS & HYGIENE

- Hand hygiene, avoid touching face, control sneezing
- Encourage student to shower prior to leaving facility (phase 3)
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces
- Display standard daily precautions & health habits
- Develop and provide infectious disease education for coaches, parents, and student athletes



REVIEW EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

- Ensure venue-specific EAPs are in place and up to date due to COVID-19 related effects on the cardiovascular, neurologic and other systems.
- Included location of nearest automated external defibrillator (AED)
- Practice and rehearse
- All coaches are CPR and first aid certified (SB 82)



CONCLUSIONS

- COVID-19 is some form is here to stay for the foreseeable future
- Administrative, Physical, and Risk Mitigation concerns should constantly be reviewed and refined
- COVID-19 fatigue is real for all of us - must continue to lead in a way that protects students, staff, and community



References

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