

## **COVID-19 Return to Play Policy**

Since the onset of COVID-19, there has been a lot of unknowns regarding the long-term health effects from the Coronavirus disease. One of the growing areas of concern has been cardiac health. Currently, the prevalence and clinical implications of COVID-19 cardiac pathology in young athletes is unknown, but it has suspected correlations to myocarditis (inflammation of the heart) and other cardiac injury. Myocarditis preceded by a viral infection is one of the leading causes of sudden cardiac death in sport. Because of this, and many recent cases of myocarditis found in young athletes in recovery from COVID-19, special considerations should be taken to assist in identifying when a young athlete is safe to return to play following a positive COVID-19 diagnosis.

Goffstown High School and the Safe Sports Network have developed the following requirements as a safety precaution for any student-athlete returning to play after a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. **Any student-athlete who tests positive for COVID-19 or has ever been diagnosed with COVID-19**, will be required to complete the following protocol before returning to competition.

### **Guidelines:**

- Student-athlete who tested positive for COVID-19 shall remain in isolation for at least the state mandated isolation period and follow all instructions given to them by the State Health Department and School District.
- Once they are released, all student-athletes with confirmed cases of COVID-19 are required to undergo a health screening by either their primary care physician or a Safe Sports Network Athletic Trainer to determine readiness to return to athletics prior to beginning the Graduated Return to Play (GRTP).
  - The physician may determine further cardiac tests are necessary before returning to sport for any student-athlete with mild, moderate or severe symptoms.
- The Graduated Return to Play (GRTP) can be started after the isolation period, as long as the student-athlete has had recovering symptoms, been fever free for at least 24 hours, and completed the screening. The GRTP will take a minimum of 5-6 days to complete. The student-athlete may progress to the next phase after 24 hours and no return/onset of symptoms, including excessive fatigue. The athletic trainer will monitor heart rate, rate of perceived exertion, fatigue, breathing patterns and muscle soreness during each phase. Student-athletes with persistent return of symptoms should be referred to their primary care provider to undergo further testing to exclude heart or lung disorders.

### **Graduated Return to Play (GRTP) Phases:**

- **Phase 1: Light Activity (1 day)**
  - Less than 15 minutes (<70% Max Heart Rate)
  - Activities can include walking, light jogging, stationary bike
- **Phase 2: Aerobic Exercise (1 Day)**

- Less than 30 mins (<80% Max Heart Rate)
- Activities can include simple movements and running drills
- **Phase 3: Simple Sport Activities (1 Day)**
  - Less than 45 mins (<80% Max Heart Rate)
  - Can progress to more complex training activities
- **Phase 4: Sport Specific Training (1 Day)**
  - Less than 60 mins (<80% Max Heart Rate)
  - Can progress intensity in sport specific training. Limited practice participation
- **Phase 5: Return to full practice**
- **Phase 6: Return to competition/game play with no restrictions**

I, the undersigned parent/guardian, understand that my child will be required to complete the above COVID-19 Return to Play Policy should they be diagnosed with COVID-19, or if they have ever been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past (and have not yet completed the protocol under the direction of the Goffstown Athletic Trainer). I understand that my child will not be able to return to competition until all of the requirements above are met, including isolation/quarantine, medical clearance, and completion of the Graduated Return to Play.