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## **Return to Training Framework following COVID-19**

A common risk factor for musculoskeletal injury is a rapid increase in sporting activity compared to the amount of physical activity to which an athlete is accustomed. Athletes will be vulnerable to injury if they try to pick up right where they left off after several weeks of rest or abbreviated workouts. This is particularly relevant at this time due to recent Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

The following recommendations for a gradual return to sport are based on government guidelines, physiotherapy and strength & conditioning research, and professional opinion. Each individual athlete's sports-layoff period and response to training volume is unique, and so the recommendations are guidelines only. As such, it is recommended that you work closely with your coach to determine the most appropriate return to play strategy for you. Your coach is very knowledgeable and will be able to give you targeted training drills specific to your current training level and your prioritised goals. For example, it may be appropriate to start with lower intensity drills or with running on a softer surface and build towards full-intensity training. For your situation and sport, it may be appropriate to first focus on skills based training and an easy introduction to fitness, or alternatively low intensity skills and short sessions of high intensity fitness.

A physiotherapist is one health professional that is well-placed to guide you in your return to sport safely. They can deliver injury prevention plans and individualised strategies to get you back on the court or field. Physiotherapists are also a great option as a first-line contact in the situation that a musculoskeletal injury occurs.

A sports physiotherapist should be consulted for any questions or if you or your coach require any specific information or guidance.

<b>Who?</b>	<b>Group A</b> – Have continued training at intensity consistently during the break	<b>Group B</b> – Have performed some training or fitness during the break, low intensity or inconsistent	<b>Group C</b> – Have performed no or minimal training during the break
<b>Focus of training</b>	Intensity	Sport-specific	Build base
<b>Minimum time frame to return to full competition</b>	4 weeks	6 weeks	8-12 weeks
<b>U11</b>	<p>Increase total training load by 10% each week. Training load can be calculated by calculating the intensity (rating 1-10, with 10 being maximal) multiplied by time (in minutes) of training. i.e. Rating 7 for 60-minute session = 420. Total training load should include sport-specific, fitness and body weight strengthening if you were previously performing this.</p> <p>Schedule two rest days per week for optimal recovery</p>	<p>Spend 4-6 weeks performing one sport-specific training session of up to 60 minutes duration each week</p> <p>Continue to perform aerobic and strength training for general fitness</p> <p>Schedule at least two rest days per week for optimal recovery. Avoid back to back training days.</p>	<p>Resume physical activity as guided by the Australian 24-hour movement guidelines. Perform 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity daily. This includes walking, cycling, swimming, running, stretching and active play but not sport-specific training.</p>

<b>Who?</b>	<b>Group A</b> – Have continued training at intensity consistently during the break	<b>Group B</b> – Have performed some training or fitness during the break, low intensity or inconsistent	<b>Group C</b> – Have performed no or minimal training during the break
<b>Focus of training</b>	Intensity	Sport-specific	Build base
<b>Minimum time frame to return to full competition</b>	4 weeks	6 weeks	8-12 weeks
<b>12 – 16 years</b>	<p>Increase total training load by 10% each week. Training load can be calculated by calculating the intensity (rating 1-10, with 10 being maximal) multiplied by time (in minutes) of training. i.e. Rating 7 for 60-minute session = 420. Total training load should include sport-specific, fitness and strengthening sessions</p> <p>Schedule two rest days per week for optimal recovery</p>	<p>Spend 4-6 weeks performing a maximum two sport-specific training sessions of up to 75 minutes duration each week</p> <p>Continue to perform aerobic and strength training for general fitness</p> <p>Schedule at least two rest days per week for optimal recovery. Avoid back to back training days</p>	<p>Resume physical activity as guided by the Australian 24-hour movement guidelines. Perform 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity daily</p> <p>This includes walking, cycling, swimming, running, stretching and strengthening but not sport-specific training.</p>
<b>Senior</b>	<p>Increase total training load by 10% each week. Training load can be calculated by calculating the intensity (rating 1-10, with 10 being maximal) multiplied by time (in minutes) of training. i.e. Rating 7 for 60-minute session = 420. Total training load should include sport-specific, fitness and strengthening sessions</p> <p>Schedule two rest days per week for optimal recovery</p>	<p>Spend 5-6 weeks performing a maximum two-three sport-specific training session of up to 90 minutes duration each week</p> <p>Continue to perform aerobic and strength training for general fitness</p> <p>Schedule at least two rest days per week for optimal recovery. Avoid back to back training days.</p>	<p>Resume physical activity as guided by the Australian 24-hour movement guidelines. Perform each week either (or a combination of):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 150-300 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity</li> <li>(b) 75-150 minutes of vigorous intensity physical activity</li> </ul> <p>Including walking, cycling, swimming, running, stretching &amp; strengthening but not sport-specific training.</p>