







GRADUATED RETURN TO ATHLETICS GUIDANCE FOLLOWING COVID-19 INFECTION





The long-term implications of Covid 19 are still being understood but with a risk of heart, kidney, lung and blood disorders, it is best practice to follow a steady return to training, paying attention to how you feel both physically and mentally rather than a rapid return to pre-Covid intensity. The earliest an athlete can expect to be back at full intensity should be at least 18 days from onset.

INDICATORS OF COVID-19 INFECTION









	SHORTNESS OF BREATH		GI SYMPTOMS SUCH AS DIARRHOEA & NAUSEA	
	NEW, PERSISTENT DRY COUGH		LOSS OF TASTE AND SMELL	
	FEVER			

COVID-19 GUIDANCE

If an athlete develops symptoms of Covid 19, they should get tested, isolate, and follow current government guidelines. They should maintain good hydration, a balanced diet and, if symptoms worsen or persist beyond 7 days, seek further medical advice. After ten days from Covid 19 onset, athletes who have had a mild or moderate illness can start a graduated return to sport program (GRTS). If hospitalisation was required, further assessment should be undertaken by a medical professional before commencing a return to sport program.

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REST FROM ONSET		AT LEAST 7 DAYS SYMPTOM FREE		OFF ALL TREATMENT, E.G. PANADOL		GRADUATED RETURN TO SPORT PROTOCOL

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	STAGE 1 10 DAYS MINIMUM	STAGE 2 2 DAYS MINIMUM	STAGE 3A 1 DAYS MINIMUM	STAGE 3B 1 DAYS MINIMUM	STAGE 4 2 DAYS MINIMUM	STAGE 5 EARLIEST DAY 17	STAGE 6
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM REST PERIOD	LIGHT ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY OF TRAINING INCREASES	DURATION OF TRAINING INCREASES	INTENSITY OF TRAINING INCREASES	RESUME NORMAL TRAINING PROGRESSIONS	RETURN TO COMPETITION
EXERCISE ALLOWED	WALKING ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING	WALKING, LIGHT JOGGING, STATIONARY CYCLE, NO RESISTANCE TRAINING	SIMPLE MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES E.G. RUNNING DRILLS	PROGRESSION TO MORE COMPLEX TRAINING ACTIVITIES	NORMAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES	RESUME NORMAL TRAINING PROGRESSIONS	
% HEART RATE MAX						RESUME NORMAL TRAINING PROGRESSIONS	
DURATION	10 DAYS					RESUME NORMAL TRAINING PROGRESSIONS	
OBJECTIVE	ALLOW RECOVERY TIME, PROTECT CARDIO- RESPIRATORY SYSTEM	INCREASE HEART RATE	INCREASE LOAD GRADUALLY, MANAGE ANY POST VIRAL FATIGUE SYMPTOMS	EXERCISE COORDINATION AND SKILLS / TACTICS	RESTORE CONFIDENCE AND ASSESS FUNCTIONAL SKILLS	RESUME NORMAL TRAINING PROGRESSIONS	

A **GRTS** is a progressive program that introduces physical activity in a stepped fashion.

Key Considerations:

- Before starting a program the athlete must be able to complete activities for daily living and walk 500m on the flat without excessive fatigue or breathlessness.
- They should be at least 10 days since onset and be 7 days symptom free before starting.
- Some monitoring will add value and could include
 - Resting heart rate
 - Sleep, stress, fatigue and muscle soreness
 - Mental health and readiness to return to sport.
- If any symptoms occur (including excessive fatigue) while going through a GRTS, the athlete must return to the previous stage and progress again after a minimum of 24 hours period of rest without symptoms.

*Adapted from the British Journal of Sports Medicine October 2020 Vol 54 No 19.
Expert guidance sought from Dr. Dan Exeter, HP Medical Director, Athletics NZ.*