

Important points to consider for the 2021-2022 Fall season and safe return to play after exposure:

- COVID-19 Symptoms include:
  - Fever ( $\geq 100.4$ ) or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
- **Isolate;** Do NOT come to school, workouts, practice, and/or competitions if you feel sick.
- **Isolate;** Do NOT come to school, workouts, practice, and/or competitions if you are symptomatic.
- Proper hand hygiene, contact tracing after an individual's positive test for COVID-19, and sanitation protocols must continue.
- Because of the state's rapid COVID-19 increase in cases and low vaccination rates, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is recommending that all people, vaccinated and unvaccinated, wear masks indoors and where 6 feet of social distancing is not physically possible.
- Masks
  - Surgical masks and two-ply washable, breathable masks are permitted.
  - Neck gaiters, face shields, clear masks, or valved masks are not permitted.
  - Masks must be worn correctly and must cover the nose and mouth.
- Social distancing of 6 feet or more on the sidelines and at practice must continue.
  - Non-essential personnel, non-active student-athletes, and/or injured student-athletes should not be allowed on the sidelines of competitions due to the unnecessary risk of exposure and to allow for adequate social distancing.
- Community hydration stations can be used to refill the athlete's personal water bottles if appropriate sanitation protocols are followed. Water bottles must not be shared between student-athletes.
  - Hand hygiene needs to be practiced prior to and after refilling bottles.

### **Safe Return to Play After Exposure**

- A **close contact** is defined as someone who is within six feet of another individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes per 24-hour period regardless of mask use or direct face to face physical contact. The exposure can be in one sitting or it can be through multiple, shorter exposures over the course of the day. One can be identified as a close contact if the exposure took place within the prior 48 hours of the positive test/onset of symptoms.
- Vaccinated Student-Athlete Recommendations
  - At this time, student-athletes who are vaccinated do not need to quarantine if they are identified as close contacts and are asymptomatic. They can continue with school and sport activity.
    - If they become symptomatic, they need to leave school/sport and need to be tested immediately. A negative test with their physicians note to return to play is required.
- Unvaccinated Student-Athlete Recommendations

- We recommend a 14-day quarantine before returning to school/athletics as it can take up to 14 days after an exposure for symptoms to begin.
  - It is known that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and LDH acknowledge 7 day and 10 day quarantine options. However, with the lack of ability to properly socially distance and with the high infectivity rates in Louisiana, a 14 day quarantine is the most appropriate option for the health and safety of our student-athletes at this time.
  - If permissible by the club, the CDC also accepts the consideration of a 10-day quarantine in the correct setting. In this scenario, the student-athlete would be permitted to leave quarantine on day 11 if no symptoms begin during the 10-day quarantine. It must be understood that symptoms can still arise between days 11 and 14 and the student-athlete will still need to be closely monitored. If symptoms begin on or later than day 11, the student-athlete must be tested immediately and must test negative before returning to school/athletics.
  - The decision between allowing a 10-day or 14-day quarantine will be left to the discretion of the individual schools or school districts.
- The CDC recommends testing 72 to 120 hours after close contact exposure for both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.
  - Unvaccinated: During this timeframe, unvaccinated individuals must quarantine for the entire duration of their quarantine regardless of the test result. If the test between hour 72-120 is positive, they begin a 10-day isolation from the positive test date. If this test is negative, continue with quarantine.
  - Vaccinated: During this timeframe, vaccinated individuals can continue with all school and sport activity. If the test between hour 72-120 is positive, they begin a 10-day isolation from the positive test date. If this test is negative, continue with all sport and school activity.
- If symptoms develop during quarantine, individuals must be tested for COVID-19.
  - If positive, 10-day isolation begins on day of positive test. If negative, continue with quarantine.
  - If symptoms arise after a negative test during quarantine athletes need to be re-tested for COVID-19.
  - If you are symptomatic, you should not leave quarantine except to be tested.
  - Individuals are allowed to return to play on day 15 if no symptoms developed during quarantine.
- Individuals within 90 days of a resolved positive COVID-19 test do not have to quarantine after a close contact event if asymptomatic.
- It must be understood that frequent close contact exposures will occur because of in-person classes and because the state is currently fully open (restaurants, stores, festivals, concerts, etc.). As such, contact tracing will be more challenging than before. Unvaccinated individuals will likely be quarantined multiple times during a season because of the extremity high positivity rates secondary to the very infectious nature of the Delta variant.
- **COVID-19 Positive Test Recommendations for Student-Athletes**
  - Recommendations are the same regardless of vaccination status.
    - A 10-day isolation is required before returning to school/athletics. Student-athletes may start the COVID-19 return to play protocol upon exit from isolation on day 11 if symptoms have resolved without the use of medications.

- A return to participation assessment and cardiac evaluation based on current recommendations must be completed by their physician before full clearance back to sport is permitted.
- A graduated return-to-play progression needs to be completed for athletes who have had any pulmonary and/or cardiac symptoms once they have been cleared by a physician and is asymptomatic when performing normal activities of daily living. The progression should be performed over a minimum of 4 days. There should not be advancement of stages if the student-athlete cannot successfully complete the exercise activity associated with their current stage.
  - Day 1-10 = Stage I: Recovery and Rest
  - Day 11 = Stage II: Light Activity
  - Day 12 = Stage III: Moderate Activity
  - Day 13 = Stage IV: Intense Activity
  - Day 14 = Stage V: Normal Training and Full Play