

# COVID-19: NSCA Guidance on Safe Return to Training for Athletes

## Minimizing Risk: Managing Schedules and Teams Training Sessions



- ✓ Adhere to social gathering and distancing policies at your institution, according to local, state, and federal authorities.
- ✓ Group size counts should include both athletes and staff, and account for transition periods between sessions.
- ✓ Schedule mid- and post-workout cleaning periods, allowing a 10-15 minute buffer between teams or groups.
- ✓ Limit or stagger training groups throughout workout blocks and/or alternate training days.
- ✓ Favor efficient training methods, limiting groups to 2-3 non-consecutive sessions per week.
- ✓ Avoid person-to-person contact while spotting with use of bar catches and the two-spotter technique.
- ✓ For programming purposes, consider grouping athletes based on conditioning status.
- ✓ Create exercise pairings to limit weight room traffic; Or one-way traffic flow based on entrances and exits.
- ✓ Maximize fresh air flow in the weight room, and a relative humidity  $\leq 60\%$ .
- ✓ Use outdoor training spaces whenever possible.
- ✓ Keep doors propped open and lights on throughout the day.

## Training Safety: Risk Factors Following Periods of Inactivity



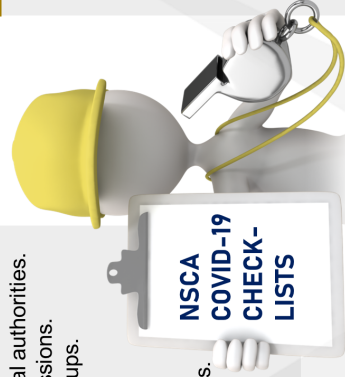
- ✓ Avoid high-volume submaximal exercises to fatigue, or performed within a limited time frame.
- ✓ Emphasize a 10-20 minute daily dynamic warm-up for reestablishing sport-related movement patterns.
- ✓ Consider that prolonged inactivity increases the likelihood of delayed onset muscle soreness.
- ✓ Communicate regularly with the medical & coaching staffs about at-risk athletes, including athletes cardiac abnormalities, history of exertional or nonexertional collapse, asthma, and diabetes.
- ✓ Consider the use of daily readiness surveys and/or workload monitoring for tracking athlete status.
- ✓ Plan & adjust workouts to match environmental factors, especially in cases of high heat & humidity.
- ✓ Do not perform physically exhausting drills for the purpose of developing "mental toughness."



## Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Resources:

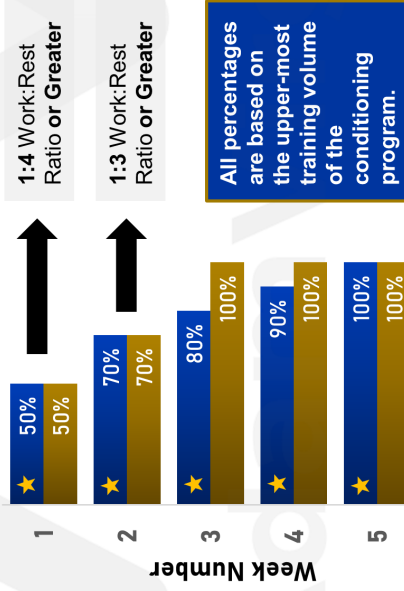
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### NSCA COVID-19 CHECK-LISTS



## The 50/30/20/10 Rule: Conditioning Training

- ★ COVID-19: All Student-Athletes Returning from Inactivity
- Normal Circumstances: Returning Student-Athletes



## Facility & Equipment: Cleaning and Sanitation Procedures



- ✓ Clean all weight room surfaces with germicidal disinfectant.
- ✓ Consider providing masks and/or gloves.
- ✓ Educate on weight room upkeep expectations during onboarding meetings with new athletes.
- ✓ Provide COVID-19 related updates to weight room rules.
- ✓ Promote hand washing before and after workouts.
- ✓ Keep extra bottles of disinfectant for athletes to wipe down equipment after use, and provide hand sanitizer at all times.
- ✓ Don't share cloth towels or rags.
- ✓ Remove and store extra loose equipment from the training floor to minimize cleaning surfaces.
- ✓ Carry a personal water bottle instead of drinking directly from the community water fountain.
- ✓ Delegate staff cleaning duties, especially towards commonly shared pieces of equipment, including medicine balls, dumbbells, kettlebells, weight belts, bars and plates.
- ✓ Ensure that cleaning and sanitation procedures are extended to restrooms, locker rooms, carpet and flooring, exercise mats, water fountains, and athlete nutrition "fueling" stations.

## The F.I.T. Rule: Weight Training

F.I.T.	Week 1	Week 2
<b>FREQUENCY</b> Sessions per Movement or Muscle Group <i>Adapted for COVID-19</i>	2 Sessions per Week	2 Sessions per Week
<b>INTENSITY</b> Sets x Reps %1RM as a Decimal for Each Periodized Lift	11-30 Units	11-30 Units
<b>TIME</b> Rest Interval	1:4 Work:Rest	1:3 Work:Rest



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**Primary reference:** National Strength and Conditioning Association COVID-19 Return to Training Task Force. COVID-19: NSCA Guidance on Safe Return to Training for Athletes. July 2020. Available at: <http://nsca.com/covid-19-return-to-training>;  
**Additional references:** Caterisano, A., et al. (2019). CSCCa and NSCA Joint Consensus Guidelines for Transition Periods: Safe Return to Training Following Inactivity. Strength and Conditioning Journal, 41(3), pp. 1-23; NCAA SSI Interassociation Recommendations: Preventing Catastrophic Injury and Death in Collegiate Athletes. July 2016. Available at: <http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/preventing-catastrophic-injury-and-death-collegiate-athletes>

