



Lurie Children's Division of Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine "Best Practices" for returning to sports and play during the COVID-19 pandemic

60 minutes of physical activity per day is encouraged

- Individual activity benefits: cardiovascular health, strength, body composition, immune system strengthening and psychological benefits
- Team sports additional benefits: socialization and structured routine provide improved mental health and behavioral development

Team sport participation has increased risks of COVID-19 transmission over individual sport participation

- Risk increases with increased number of players, decreased spacing, increased frequency and duration of player contact.
- Risk increases with indoor participation, decreased size and ventilation of facility
- While the risk of transmission decreases when using shared equipment, facilities and common surfaces for either team or individual sports, none of these is risk free.

Risk/benefit analysis of team sport participation should be evaluated on an individual child/family basis

- High risk medical problems for consideration: cancer, obesity, heart condition, sickle cell disease, type 2 diabetes, chronic kidney disease, COPD, immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant, medically complex condition, neurologic problem, genetic problem, or metabolic problem, moderate-to-severe asthma
- Lowest Risk activity: Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members; attending virtually coach-led practices through a video conference platform
- Increasing Risk activity: Team-based practice
- More Risk: Within-team competition
- Even More Risk: Full competition between teams from the same local geographic area
- Highest Risk: Full competition between teams from different geographic areas

Appropriate masking, hand hygiene, and social distancing precautions should be maintained

- Face coverings should be worn by coaches, officials, spectators, and volunteers
- All athletes should wear a cloth face mask when on the sidelines, but masks may be removed during vigorous exercise or high intensity activity
- Maintain social distancing of player/participants (6 feet or greater when able)
- Daily symptom monitoring should be performed, with no play if symptomatic
- Two-week quarantine and clearance by physician for return to play for participants or participants with household contacts who test positive for COVID-19

Resources:

- [Youth Sports Participation During COVID-19: A Safety Checklist](#)
- [Youth Sports and COVID-19: Understanding Risks](#)
- [AAP COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Return to Sports](#)
- [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#)
- [Why Face Coverings are Needed in Youth Sports During COVID-19](#)