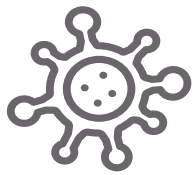


As we learn to cope with COVID-19, helping clients safely participate in sports and physical activity is vital.

Here you will find key calls to action from the American College of Sports Medicine on how to protect yourself and your clients during sports and physical activities.



UNDERSTAND THE VIRUS.

While there are still a lot of unknowns when it comes to COVID-19, we do know that the virus attacks vascular tissue throughout the body and causes ischemic injury and inflammatory reactions that destroy cells and tissues. We also know that the virus causes direct tissue damage and that the immune system can over-respond in a way that can cause significant and widespread damage to the body.



BE AWARE OF RISK FACTORS.

An analysis of the most severe cases of COVID-19 indicates a link to obesity and obesity-related conditions, physical inactivity, older age, and racial and ethnic minority status. Of course, the prevalence of diseases of inactivity, which include obesity and hypertension, will only worsen as people become less active due to long-term lockdowns and a perceived reduction in opportunities to be physically active.



KEEP INTENSITIES MODERATE.

Healthy individuals should start or continue moderate physical activity for 150 to 300 minutes a week, which will help them maintain immune health. Remember, however, that smaller amounts of physical activity are still beneficial. High-risk individuals, in particular, should refrain from exhaustive exercise, overreaching and overtraining.



BE CAUTIOUS WITH CLIENTS WHO HAVE HAD COVID-19.

Individuals who had COVID-19 should consult with a primary care physician to determine a safe return to exercise. If a client is returning to exercise after a bout of mild or moderate COVID-19 or after having a positive test, advise rest and no exercise for two weeks, followed by slowly resuming physical activity under close monitoring by their healthcare team.



TAKE STANDARD COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS.

Clients should exercise at home or outside while maintaining proper physical distance from others and using face coverings when needed to minimize droplet spread. Have clients wear masks (and wear one yourself) to reduce spread and avoid close contact when masking is not a viable option.



BE INNOVATIVE.

The COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as an opportunity for health coaches and exercise professionals to get creative and expand their approach to empowering clients to become more physically active. This may include offering outdoor or virtual sessions, utilizing off-peak hours at fitness facilities to stagger workouts and encouraging clients to exercise in family clusters.