

COVID and Pediatric Return to Sport: CCHMC Heart Institute Guidelines

- Exercise has important benefits in regard to preventing illness and improving physical and mental health. The Heart Institute at CCHMC is committed to encouraging all patients to pursue an active and healthy lifestyle while mitigating the rare actual and theoretical risks. COVID-19 can have cardiovascular effects, and there has been understandable concern amongst patients, parents, and providers when considering return to exercise and sports. The old adage that 'children are not small adults' was never more true than with COVID-19, where the manifestations and sequelae appear to vary with age. Consequently, the approach to pediatric patients returning to sport should be specifically considered in this context, and so may not mirror exactly the recommendations of the adult population.
- We endorse the recently reported algorithm (see below) developed by experts in the field of pediatric exercise for patients less than 22 years of age (Dean P, Jackson L, Paridon S. Returning to Play after Coronavirus Infection: Pediatric Cardiologists' Perspective. <https://www.acc.org/latest-in-cardiology/articles/2020/07/13/13/37/returning-to-play-after-coronavirus-infection>)
- We do not recommend screening for prior COVID-19 exposure in those with no or mild previous symptoms.
- The majority of pediatric patients, who have made a full recovery from mild disease, will be able to be easily cleared for participation without a need for additional cardiac testing.
- For college athletes, we recommend that decisions be made in consultation with their University/team physicians.
- We encourage both youth and competitive sport organizations (irrespective of COVID-19) to have emergency action response plans, and appropriate CPR and AED training.
- MIS-C patients represent a very rare subtype of COVID-19 patients who will be followed by cardiology in the outpatient setting with decisions about return to

sports based on illness and testing results and should be considered separately from these guidelines.

- During these times we recognize that individual patients may not fit the algorithm so please call cardiology to discuss these patients as needed.

