

Saint Vincent College Return to Sports During COVID-19

Fall 2020 Revised January 20, 2022

Introduction

This document is a guideline of standards to be followed by the athletic department to permit the resumption of collegiate athletic participation. These recommendations are based on the updated NCAA 2022 Winter Training and Competition document (January 14, 2022) which is based on the information from the NCAA COVID-19 Medical Advisory Group, the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine Working Group, and the Autonomy 5 Medical Advisory Group and takes into consideration available recommendations from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention. However, even with such expert backing, we cannot guarantee the prevention of COVID-19 nor any other illness or infection. Playing sports and participating in activities with numerous people does increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.

Athletic Participation COVID-19 Policies

This information will be updated according to the CDC, NCAA, and Saint Vincent College guidelines. Please check frequently for these updates.

Testing, Quarantine, Isolation and Other Activities

The following information is from thew NCAA COVID-19 Management Considerations with adaptations to follow Saint Vincent College and Presidents' Athletic Conference policies as needed.

		UNVACCINATED OR NOT FULLY VACCINATED	FULLY VACCINATED AND BOOSTER ELIGIBLE (NOT UP-TO-DATE)	FULLY VACCINATED AND UP-TO-DATE OR DOCUMENTED INFECTION IN PAST 90 DAYS
TESTING	Upon Arrival to Campus, or Return to Campus from a Winter Break	Single polymerase chain reaction/nucleic acid amplification test within three to 5 days of arrival, or two antigen tests on nonconsecutive days within three to 5 days of arrival. No team training or competition until single PCR/NAAT or both antigen tests are negative.	No testing unless symptomatic or based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.	
	Surveillance Testing	Based on level of community immunity, community spread, and local public health official recommendations. If community spread is substantial or high, weekly PCR/NAAT testing or three-times-week antigen testing	No testing unless symptomatic or based on risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.	
	During Competition Season	During a week with no competition: mitigation strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly PCR/NAAT testing or three-times-a-week antigen testing mitigation strategy. During a week with competition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCR/NAAT test within three days of first competition of the week; OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antigen test within one day of each competition (continue three-times-a-week antigen testing if fewer than three competitions). 	No testing unless symptomatic or based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.	
	Sustained Increased Transmission	If sustained increased transmission occurs on a team, test all symptomatic individuals and consider testing individuals with close contacts or apply a similar risk mitigation strategy. Sustained increased transmission is likely occurring if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team of < 50: Concurrent positive cases of three or more. Team of > 50: Concurrent positive cases of 5 percent or more. When sustained increased transmission is occurring, decisions about continued team activity should be made at the local level and with consideration given to ongoing risk of team transmission or transmission to another team during competition.		

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QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION	Quarantine Protocol for Close Contacts**	Quarantine at home for 5 days. On day 6, an evaluation by a healthcare professional will determine days 6-10 protocol. *During days 6 - 10 of quarantine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a well-fitting mask socially and when actively training/competing for days 6-10. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain in quarantine for days 6-10. Test symptomatic individuals. *Apply previous considerations regarding activity during quarantine (e.g., continue individual exercise if it does not cause cardiopulmonary symptoms).		No quarantine. Wear a well-fitting mask socially and when actively training/competing for 10 days. Test symptomatic individuals.
	Positive Test Protocol	Isolate for 5 days. On day 6, an evaluation by a healthcare professional will determine days 6-10 protocol. *During days 6 - 10 of quarantine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a well-fitting mask socially and when actively training/competing for days 6-10. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain in quarantine for days 6-10. ** If there is a fever, continue to isolate until fever resolves. Follow the updated exercise recommendations of the expert panel with members from the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine and the American College of Cardiology.		

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ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES	Training and Competition	Restrictions for asymptomatic individuals who are not following quarantine or isolation protocols. If you are NOT a contact traced person and regardless of vaccination status, well-fitting masks are to be worn at all times when indoors. Only exception is when a high cardiac output activity is taking place. Examples of high cardiac output are scrimmaging, running sprints, burpees, etc.. Masking exception does not include stretching, cool down, lifting, or drills. If you are required to wear well-fitted mask during competition, you will be wearing during scrimmaging activities. Regardless of vaccination status, all SAs and coaching staff must be masked on bench or sideline. Game personnel must be masked at all times.		
	Team Travel	All members of travel parties should wear a well-fitting mask. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those with a positive test who have been in isolation for 5 days and are fever free for 24 hours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Travel in days 6 - 10 of an isolation period may be considered. Team physician agreement is needed. • For those with a positive test who are within day 6 of isolation or continue to have a fever past day 5 of isolation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Mass transit travel is prohibited prior to day 6 or those with symptoms/fever. This individual may only travel by private transportation only. • For those in quarantine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If fully vaccinated or infection in the past 90 days, wear a well-fitting mask during travel. o For all others, no travel until day 6. May travel wearing well-fitted mask on day 6 if no symptoms. If symptoms, treat as positive and follow protocol above for positive individual. • For those traveling with multiple night hotel stays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prior to leaving for trip, the coach must present to the Athletic Director and the sport's ATC a written plan for safe return of positive or unvaccinated quarantined athlete following protocol above. 		
	Other Athletic Activities (e.g., team meetings, lifting, yoga, etc.)	Well-fitted masks are to be worn at all times when indoors. Only exception is when a high cardiac output activity is taking place. Examples of high cardiac output are scrimmaging, running sprints, burpees, etc.. Masking exception does not include stretching, cool down, lifting, or drills.		

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Nonathletic Activities		Wear a well-fitting mask in public indoor settings (e.g., Classrooms) and outdoors in large crowds where community immunity is unknown or or above moderate and where vaccination status cannot be determined.		
In-Person Interactions		Consider wearing a well-fitting mask in indoor settings where vaccination status of all individuals is unknown.		

**Close contact in athletics is defined as members of contact/collision teams with moderate contact of an infected individual during athletic activity or travel or within 6 feet of an infected individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24- hour period.

Athletic Training Room

There will only be one point of entry into the athletic training room (ATR). A hand sanitation station will be made available prior to entry of the ATR. Everyone will be instructed to use. All individuals must enter the facility with a face mask on. They will then wait for the athletic trainer (ATC) to instruct them where to go. Athletic trainers are to wear face masks when in close contact with others in the ATR and outside when treating and/or evaluating a S-A.

1. Athletic Training Room Office

The office of the ATR will have restrictions to reduce risk. Athletic trainers will socially distance when possible. Schedules will be staggered when possible. No S-As will be permitted to enter the office of the ATR. If privacy is needed for a confidential discussion, the physician's office is available for use.

2. Student-Athlete Scheduling Treatment/Rehabilitation/Evaluation Times

Student-Athletes must schedule an appointment for any type of treatment, rehabilitation, evaluation, and taping. All appointments must schedule the day before. This will be done via email (athletic.training@stvincent.edu) to ensure guidelines for social gatherings and distances can be followed.

Student-athletes are no longer permitted to just "drop-in" for taping or stretching. If rehabilitation due to a surgery/injury is required, they will have precedence to scheduling the necessary appointment. Maintenance treatments of taping and modalities may not be available or at the least limited. Student-athletes will be encouraged to wear bracing and do preventative treatment (heating pad, stretching, foam rolling) on their own, in their rooms.

The number of treatments during a specific timeframe will be limited in number, depending on the type of treatment needed, availability of the ATC, and social gathering limitations. The ATR will not run at maximum capacity and all individuals being treated are expected to social distance if possible. Once practices start, no additional treatments will be administered to anyone.

Self-service of items from the ATR is discontinued for the time being. Student-athletes needing items must seek permission from the ATC.

All S-As are expected to be on time. If S-As are late, they may be asked to leave. This is to prevent overcrowding in the athletic training room areas and fairness to those that are on time. If S-As are early, they will be directed to wait in the Carey Center lounge area or outside, social distancing must be always observed. No food or drinks are permitted in the ATR unless directed for a medical condition. Once treatment session is over, the S-A will be mandated to leave the facility immediately.

Intense cardio workouts in ATR will be minimal during rehabilitation due to fact of an increase in forced air intake and exhalation during intense workouts. These cardio workouts should be done outdoors.

Use of modalities including whirlpools many be limited depending on community and campus spread.

3. Student Workers

Student workers will follow the same guidelines as S-A. Student workers must be masked at all times in the ATR. Masking is also required if unvaccinated when covering practices and/or competitions. Hand sanitizer will be given to each student worker at the beginning of the year. They are to be responsible to ask for more when supply is depleted.

Hydration and Sanitization

Each S-A will be provided his or her own water bottle. Student-Athletes will be responsible for filling their own hydration device prior to and at practices. Sanitation items will be available at water coolers to sanitize spout prior to and after filling the device. This may require additional and/or longer water breaks. Each sport will have a cooler marked with their sport. This is the only cooler they are to use unless given permission by ATC. When S-A bring coolers back to ATR, they must be cleaned with Clorox Clean-Up and rinsed thoroughly prior to putting on the shelf. For away trips, teams will be required to take their own water bottles or cups. Host teams will not be providing water bottles and/or cups. The coach will need to communicate with their ATC when cups are needed.

Sports Practice Procedures

When reporting to practice, it is imperative that all social gathering/distance guidelines, all self-hygiene protocols, masking protocols and rules submitted by the Saint Vincent College Athletic COVID-19 Protocol be followed. The main goal is to provide the highest quality of care possible to the S-A while maintaining safe practices. **This is very important for everyone – from the S-A to staff members. If you are sick, do not come to practice or work.**

1. The following restrictions will be followed:
2. Preventative taping will not be done. Wearing a brace is a better option to provide support for prevention of non-significant injuries.
3. Injury taping will only be done by appointment, which is made the day prior. Social distancing will be performed during any waiting period during taping or treatment sessions.
4. It is expected that the S-A must be punctual for their allotted time slot.
5. Student-athlete must wear a face mask and abide by all athletic training room rules.
6. Treatments will NOT be given once practices have begun.
7. If S-A requires other treatments using modalities (stim, ultrasound, probe, etc.) they must schedule an appointment following the guidelines. These will be provided at the discretion of the athletic trainer. No maintenance modalities will be permitted.
8. Post practice treatments will be limited to a “grab and go” style format. This means that ice bags will be placed in a cooler in a designated area for S-A to take with them as they leave. They must sign in prior to taking ice. This will alleviate over-crowding issues of S-A coming in ATR after practice to get iced and congregate.

Student-athletes must limit all close proximity treatments to injury only status. This means S-As must stretch on their own when possible.

AFTER ALL PRACTICES AND HOME COMPETITIONS, ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES MUST shower before entering the athletic training room, going to eat, or going to class.

If these policies and procedures are repeatedly violated by same individual(s), the individual(s) will be removed from practice and directed to the Athletic Administrators and/or other appropriate College officials for possible disciplinary action.

On the Field Protocols

Once practices start, treatments will not be available to S-A during this time. Ice will be available. The following restrictions are to be followed:

All coaches, staff, and S-A should abide by the closing period rule mentioned above. Hand sanitizer stations should be placed in areas that are out of play at each venue.

Hydration is a very large concern for controlling contamination. **WATER BOTTLES CANNOT BE SHARED.**

With respect to water bottles:

1. Every S-A will be responsible to fill their own bottle and carry it with them when moving to different areas on the field of play.
2. All bottles must be marked with the S-A last name, their number, and sport so that it can be easily identified.
3. If permitted by state, there may be water coolers on site for the purpose of refill only. No one should be drinking directly out of the cooler. This will cause contamination.
4. After practice, the S-A will be responsible for dumping out their water bottle, cleaning it and storing it in a safe location. Student-athletes may want to store their water bottles in a sealed plastic bag in order to prevent possible contamination.
5. Again, it is the responsibility of the S-A to maintain a clean water bottle and to NOT share water bottles with others.
6. On warm, humid days, water breaks should occur more frequently.
7. Coaches may want to consider adjusting the time for practice since the S-A may have to run to a location further than normal to get his/her bottle.