



Guidance for Safe Return to Training following COVID-19

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are unprecedented, including the closure of college and university campuses throughout the country for the past several months. This has resulted in collegiate athletes being away from supervised training sessions conducted by their strength and conditioning staffs for an extended period of time, and athletes are slowly beginning their return to college campuses. These athletes have already been away well past two-weeks which will mark their ultimate return to supervised training as a **transition period**—a time during which the athlete is at greatest risk for exertion-related issues.

The [CSCCa and NSCA Joint Consensus Guidelines for Transition Periods: Safe Return to Training following Inactivity](#) was published in the June 2019 issue of the *NSCA Strength and Conditioning Journal*. This landmark document can be accessed from the [home page](#) of the CSCCa website (scroll down to just below the banner of CSCCa sponsors). The goal of the CSCCa is for there not to be a single athlete death or serious illness/injury during the coming year in spite of the extremely long break from supervised training. The CSCCa is confident that if the protocols explained in this consensus document are carefully and precisely followed, the health and safety of collegiate athletes will be protected. Master Strength and Conditioning Coaches Don Decker, Scott Bennett, Rob Glass, Jennifer Jones, and Ken Mannie served on the Committee which developed these protocols. They, along with the CSCCa Board of Directors, a team of researchers, and 150-peer-reviewed documents stand behind these protocols. Both the CSCCa and the NSCA endorse them as best practices.

These important protocols can be successfully adapted and implemented into any strength and conditioning program, and they complement the NCAA's [Interassociation Recommendations: Preventing Catastrophic Injury and Death in College Student-Athletes](#), which was also released in 2019. The CSCCa and NSCA Joint Consensus document provides specific formulas strength and conditioning coaches can apply to their programs to safely reduce volume and intensity while providing appropriate recovery. There is no guess work. The recommended percentages to be utilized during the first weeks of the transition period are provided, along with various ways in which the reduced percentages can be applied to the conditioning program (testing and training). A similar approach is provided for strength training programs. These protocols provide a safe transition to maximal training outputs in as few as two weeks for returning athletes and four weeks for new athletes.

The charts on the following pages summarize the two protocols:

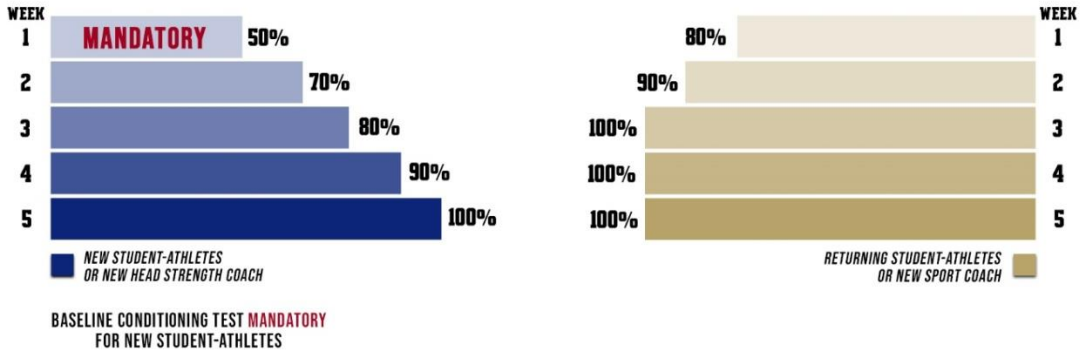


CSCCa AND NSCA JOINT CONSENSUS GUIDELINES FOR TRANSITION PERIODS:
SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY

THE 50/30/20/10 RULE
CONDITIONING TESTING

PERCENT OF MAXIMUM CONDITIONING TEST VOLUME ON FILE FOR SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY

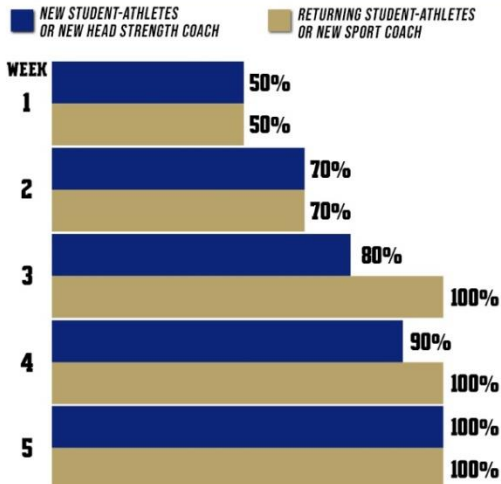
PERCENT OF MAXIMUM CONDITIONING TEST WORKLOAD ON FILE FOR SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY



CATERISANO, A., DECKER, D., SNYDER, B., FEIGENBAUM, M., GLASS, R., HOUSE, P., SHARP, C., WALLER, M. AND WITHERSPOON, Z., 2019. CSCCa AND NSCA JOINT CONSENSUS GUIDELINES FOR TRANSITION PERIODS: SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY. STRENGTH & CONDITIONING JOURNAL, 41(3), PP.1-23.



CSCCa AND NSCA JOINT CONSENSUS GUIDELINES FOR TRANSITION PERIODS:
SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY



PERCENT OF MAXIMUM CONDITIONING VOLUME PER WEEK FOR SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY

THE 50/30/20/10 RULE
CONDITIONING TRAINING

- ALL CONDITIONING TRAINING IN **WEEK ONE** MUST ABIDE BY A **1:4** WORK-REST RATIO OR GREATER
- ALL CONDITIONING TRAINING IN **WEEK TWO** MUST ABIDE BY A **1:3** WORK-REST RATIO OR GREATER
- ALL PERCENTAGES ARE BASED ON THE UPPER MOST TRAINING VOLUME OF THE CONDITIONING PROGRAM



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CSCCA AND NSCA JOINT CONSENSUS GUIDELINES FOR TRANSITION PERIODS:
SAFE RETURN TO TRAINING FOLLOWING INACTIVITY

THE F.I.T. RULE WEIGHT TRAINING

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2
FREQUENCY SESSIONS PER MOVEMENT OR MUSCLE GROUP	3 SESSIONS PER WEEK	4 SESSIONS PER WEEK
INTENSITY SETS X REPS X %1RM AS A DECIMAL FOR EACH PERIODIZED LIFT	11 - 30 UNITS	11 - 30 UNITS
TIME REST INTERVAL	1:4 WORK:REST	1:3 WORK:REST



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A summary of the guidelines can be found [here](#)

Some athletic conferences have created committees with representation from various groups within the athletic department to determine the best way to safely and effectively re-introduce the athletes to training. Regardless of the circumstances, **these protocols should be the basis upon which all strength and conditioning programs are developed and implemented.** In the spirit of unity, the CSCCa looks forward to all strength and conditioning coaches working together as a profession to ensure the health and safety of all collegiate athletes through safe and appropriate exercise prescription as they return to campuses following this extended time away from supervised training. In order for these protocols to protect athlete health and safety, however, they must be implemented.

The strength and conditioning coaching community is admonished to avoid the risk of overly aggressive training for the safety of the athlete. Please remember that these protocols provide safe parameters for strength and conditioning coaches to follow while allowing coaches flexibility and latitude in determining how best to implement them into their programs. **Following these evidence-based protocols gives each athlete the best chance to transition safely back into the stresses of his/her sport and is our best defense against exertion-related issues.**

Questions or concerns regarding these protocols should be directed to the CSCCa National Office:
info@csc.ca.org or 801-375-9400.