



RETURN TO ARTISTIC SWIMMING

RESOURCE DOCUMENT

JUNE 5, 2020

CANADA
ARTISTIC
SWIMMING

LEGAL DISCLAIMER

Canada Artistic Swimming has prepared this document based on the latest information available to date from third-party sources, including the World Health Organization and local public health authorities. The document will be updated periodically as the situation evolves and more information comes available.

This document is meant to provide information and guidance as to best practices based on current information. Each club is however responsible for assessing the risks in its particular environment and establishing the appropriate safety procedures to minimize those risks, while following the advice and instructions of public health and government authorities.

Additionally, it is an individual's responsibility for assessing their personal risks in consultation with medical professionals and for the outcome of their decisions and actions.

Each sport organization should comply with the requirements of the provincial and local government and health officials in terms of public gatherings and sporting events when determining when it is safe to return to activities. Nothing in this document is intended to provide legal advice. Do not rely on this document or treat it as legal advice.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
General information COVID-19	1
Government and Public Health Information	2
COVID-19 and Pool Safety	2
Health Monitoring.....	3
Quarantine (self-isolate) vs ISOLATION.....	3
Quarantine (self-isolate).....	3
Isolate	3
Home Isolation Recommendations	3
Procedure for the Prompt Identification, Isolation and Transportation of “sick” Individuals.....	4
Training Group Protocol for a Positive Test.....	4
Return to Training After Having COVID-19.....	5
Building a Safe Return to Sport Plan.....	5
Assess Your Situation.....	5
Facility Operations	5
Flow and Physical Distancing - Adopt a “Get in, train and get out” Approach	5
Cleaning, Hygiene and Sanitation	6
Considerations for building your plan	7
Participants	7
Group Size.....	7
Risk Assessment.....	7
Emergency Action Plan (EAP)	7
Safe Sport	7
Conduct Policy	8
Registration	8
Club Fees and Refund Policies	8
Communications	8
Daily Individual Health Monitoring	9
Training and Physical Distancing	9
Training and Equipment Use	10
Training and Hygiene	10
Developing your Training plan.....	10
Insurance and Liability	11
Federal, Provincial and Territorial COVID-19 Public Health Links.....	12
Provincial Artistic Swimming Links	12
Relevant Links.....	12
Conclusion	12
APPENDIX 1 Club Risk Assessment Tool for Return to Sport.....	13
APPENDIX 2 Sample Gradual Return to Water Training Schedule.....	14



INTRODUCTION

Sport makes an important contribution to the physical and emotional well-being of Canadians. As Canada begins to reopen for business after weeks of isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for PTSOs and Clubs to have a well-constructed plan for returning to the pool. The resumption of sport and recreational activities will be a complex process and will require that a purposeful, phased-in process be implemented to ensure the safety of athletes, coaches, other personnel and the wider local community.

The intent of this document is not to provide permission to return to sport, but rather provide a tool which consists of a minimum baseline of standards from current evidence, and guidelines from the provincial, territorial, and federal health authorities extrapolated into the sporting context by medical experts in infectious diseases and public health. The document focuses on 'how' the reintroduction of sport activity will occur in a cautious and methodical manner from an athlete, coach, and club perspective.

As the COVID-19 response varies from location to location, there is no standard approach that applies to all PTSOs and clubs however there are standard guidelines and practices to mitigate risk being recommended by various health and government agencies that need to be adhered to and that have been incorporated in the Return to Artistic Swimming document. We expect that there will be variations across the country so the document may not address all that will be required depending on your location. This document is meant to complement, not replace local public health and recreation facility advice.

The COVID-10 situation and the information available continues to evolve quickly. The information contained in the document is based on the best information available at the time of its publication.



GENERAL INFORMATION COVID-19

COVID-19 is a type of coronavirus mostly found in animals, but when humans become infected, symptoms can range from mild to severe depending on a number of variables. The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Tragic consequences of this virus are being experienced around the world, including within Canada. There are many ongoing challenges for all of us to manage, and for our Canadian artistic swimming community, a safe and responsible return to artistic swimming is paramount. It is critical that everyone understands that COVID-19 can be spread prior to the onset of symptoms.

TRANSMISSION

COVID-19 is highly transmissible from person-to-person. The virus is primarily spread between people during close contact, most often via small droplets produced by coughing, sneezing, and talking. The droplets usually fall to the ground or onto surfaces rather than travelling through air over long distances. People catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces (fomites), then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19. The virus can persist in the air for up to three hours and on a variety of surfaces for up to 5 days (plastics and steel showing some of the longest times)¹.

The virus is most contagious during the first three days after the onset of symptoms, although spread is possible before symptoms appear (pre-symptomatic), and can even be spread from people who may not show symptoms (asymptomatic)². Common symptoms include fever, cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, and loss of smell and taste. While most cases result in mild symptoms, some may progress to acute respiratory distress syndrome, multi-organ failure, septic shock, and blood clots. The time from exposure to onset of symptoms is typically around five days but may range from



two to fourteen days, one of the factors making this such a hard disease to monitor and control.

Additional Information:

[Government of Canada: COVID-19](#) 

[World Health Organization: Coronavirus](#) 

[CDC: What you should know about the Coronavirus to protect yourself and others](#) 

[What is the Coronavirus \(John Hopkins\)](#) 



GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

The timing of progression for the resumption of sport and recreational activity will be regulated by Provincial and Municipal Government's restrictions and guidelines, which will be influenced by any evidence of transmission issues within a local community.

Localized outbreaks may require PTSOs and clubs to restrict, postpone, or cancel return to training, and all clubs must be ready to respond accordingly. The timeline for reopening will vary depending on the jurisdiction and not all Provinces and clubs will resume operations simultaneously.

One representative in the organization should be designated to monitor provincial and local government websites for daily updates or changes to health guidelines.



COVID-19 AND POOL SAFETY

Are Swimming Pools safe?

COVID-19 has a fragile lipid outer membrane, and is therefore highly susceptible to soaps and oxidants, such as chlorine³. According to the Centre for Disease Control (USA), there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools, hot tubs or spas. Proper operation maintenance, disinfection with chlorine or bromine of pools should inactivate the virus (CDC 2020)

As new information and research becomes available, the general knowledge about pool safety will continue to increase and will influence decisions made by facility management.

General pool safety is among the ongoing challenges for all partners to manage, and for the Canadian aquatic community, a safe and responsible return to the pool is critical.

CDC⁴: [Water and COVID-19 Facts](#)

Myrtha Pools: [COVID-19 Swimming Pool Study](#); Professor Vincenzo Romano Spica, (Professor of Hygiene at the University of Rome "Foro Italico")





HEALTH MONITORING

Individuals should not participate in artistic swimming programs or any activity if, in the last 14 days, the individual, or anyone in their household has:

- ➔ Experienced symptoms or signs of COVID-19, even if mild (including fever, sore throat, dry cough, fatigue, chills and body aches, shortness of breath, chest pain, diarrhea, pink eye, or loss of smell or taste)
- ➔ A confirmed case of COVID-19, or are waiting to hear the results of a lab test for COVID-19
- ➔ Had close contact with someone who has a suspected, or confirmed case of COVID-19
- ➔ Been told by public health that they may have been exposed and need to quarantine
- ➔ Have travelled to or had a lay-over in any country outside of Canada
- ➔ Have travelled from another province in Canada (if the province requires a period of quarantine following travel from another province)



QUARANTINE (SELF-ISOLATE) VS ISOLATION⁵

QUARANTINE (SELF-ISOLATE)

Quarantine for 14 days if you have **no symptoms** and **any** of the following apply:

- ➔ you are returning from travel outside of Canada (mandatory quarantine)
- ➔ you had close contact with someone who has or is suspected to have COVID-19
- ➔ you have been told by the public health authority that you may have been exposed and need to quarantine

ISOLATE

You must isolate if **any** of the following apply:

- ➔ you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or are waiting to hear the results of a lab test for COVID-19
- ➔ you have symptoms of COVID-19, even if mild
- ➔ you have been in contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19
- ➔ you have been told by public health that you may have been exposed to COVID-19
- ➔ you have returned from travel outside Canada with symptoms of COVID-19 (mandatory)

HOME ISOLATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✔ Notify your doctor or local health department by phone, as testing may be indicated
- ✔ Remain at home except to get urgent medical care
- ✔ Do not go to work, school, pool or other public places
- ✔ Cancel non urgent appointments
- ✔ Do not use public transport
- ✔ Monitor your symptoms and seek medical attention if you are having difficulty breathing, are unable to drink fluids or if your illness is significantly worsening
- ✔ Wear a face masks when around others, particularly when physical distancing cannot be maintained
- ✔ Separate from household members, at least 2 metres at all times
- ✔ Do not have visitors



- ✔ Stay in a well-ventilated room (open windows) and use your own bathroom if possible
- ✔ Sanitize common use surfaces frequently
- ✔ If close contacts are vulnerable in terms of their health, consider alternative accommodations
- ✔ Avoid sharing household items
- ✔ Maintain excellent hand hygiene



PROCEDURE FOR THE PROMPT IDENTIFICATION, ISOLATION AND TRANSPORTATION OF “SICK” INDIVIDUALS

Each Club must have a designated person in place prior to returning to artistic swimming in the pool who is the lead for the COVID-19 portfolio and is responsible for:

- ➔ Being the primary contact for participants to self-report COVID-19 symptoms or exposure.
- ➔ Removing participants who feel unwell from further training.
- ➔ Immediately separating (isolating) staff, patrons, or swimmers with [COVID-19 symptoms](#) (for example, fever, cough, or shortness of breath).
- ➔ Immediately notifying facility staff while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with privacy laws.
- ➔ Notifying participants of possible exposure to COVID-19 in the instance that an individual with symptoms of COVID-19, even if mild, attended training (This is why you need a detailed attendance log).
- ➔ Reporting any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 as directed by their PTSO or Club Board.
- ➔ Reporting any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 as directed by Public Health.
- ➔ Modifying, restricting, postponing, or cancelling return to training due to an evolving COVID-19-related outbreak or emergency within their club or recreational facility.
- ➔ Establishing procedures for safely transporting anyone sick to their home or to a healthcare provider.
- ➔ Depending on which areas of the facility the individual has been in, precautions will need to be taken by other participants until the thorough cleaning of surfaces and equipment has taken place.



TRAINING GROUP PROTOCOL FOR A POSITIVE TEST

If any staff or staff tests positive for COVID-19, the following steps must be taken :

- ✔ The athlete is removed from the training group immediately.
- ✔ Training for the training group is suspended and all team members are placed in self-isolation.
- ✔ The local public health authority will provide further management recommendations which may include further testing, and contact tracing.
- ✔ Any further team members who develop symptoms will be referred to the appropriate health authority or helpline for guidance on testing and appropriate management.
- ✔ Group Training can resume if:
 - ✔ All members undergo self-isolation for 14 days and no other member develops symptoms.
 - ✔ All members are cleared to return to the training group by their physician in accordance with Provincial guidelines.





RETURN TO TRAINING AFTER HAVING COVID-19

The decision on when it is appropriate to return to the training environment following a positive COVID-19 test will require medical advice and clearance by a doctor. Recommendations will vary based on a number of factors and may include further testing in some cases.

An athlete's return to sport after a COVID-19 infection requires special consideration prior to resumption of high intensity physical activity. While there is increasing research on the multi-organ nature of COVID-19 in the acute phase, there is currently limited research on medium to long-term complications.

Any athlete, coach, or staff member who contracted COVID-19 must meet the following minimum criteria prior to retuning training environment:

- ✔ Be symptom-free for 14 days before participating in artistic swimming programs or activity.
- ✔ Have written clearance from a physician



BUILDING A SAFE RETURN TO SPORT PLAN

ASSESS YOUR SITUATION

Since each province's reopening plan differs it is the responsibility of all PTSOs, clubs, coaches and members to:

- ✔ **Strictly adhere to the policies and procedures outlined by their provincial and municipal governments and public health agencies that have been established to ensure a safe environment for all and;**
- ✔ Complete a detailed Risk Assessment (A sample Risk Assessment tool can be found in Appendix 1) to determine what the risk factor is (high-medium-low) for a return to artistic swimming in your specific jurisdiction and situation and;
- ✔ Know and follow guidelines for the number of people allowed in the facility at one time and other physical distancing requirements determined by health authorities and the facility and;
- ✔ Communicate with venue operators in advance of restarting about what their cleaning and physical distancing strategy is and how you can help implement and contribute to a safe and clean environment

FACILITY OPERATIONS

Flow and Physical Distancing - Adopt a "Get in, train and get out" Approach

Physical distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak. In Canada, as physical distancing measures remain in force, individuals are required to maintain a minimal physical distance of 2 m (6 feet) between individuals at all times.

The recommended distances when training and exercising are larger. A recent study by a Belgian and Dutch group looked at air flow and particles when exercising⁶. On the basis of these lab controlled (no prevailing wind etc.) results the scientist advises that for walking the distance of people moving in the same direction in 1 line should be at least 4-5 meters, for running and slow walking it should be 10 metres and for hard biking at least 20 metres. Also, when passing someone it is advised to already be in a different lane at a considerable distance e.g. 20 metres for biking.

"The greater volume and rate of breathing that occurs during exercise has the risk of spreading droplets farther," Levine says. He doesn't have actual data, but says, "I think it's reasonable [to increase social distancing] based on the known changes in breathing during exercise."



The number of participants allowed in a facility at any given time must follow the venue, municipal, provincial and public health restrictions for a maximum number of persons allowed in gathering. The facility and its users must develop a plan for movement of participants in the facility that respects these gathering restrictions.

General Risk Mitigation Strategies Checklist for Physical Distancing

- ✔ Drop-off and pick-up of athletes to happen outside the facility according to a set schedule to avoid “congregations” of people during drop off and pick up.
- ✔ Establish facility access with one entry point and a separate exit point.
- ✔ Post signage that reinforces social distancing and illness prevention measures. (The Public Health Agency of Canada has free posters and handouts available on their website).
- ✔ Multi-use facilities manage access in a way that prevents interaction/cross over between different user groups.
- ✔ Install visible markings on floors to indicate appropriate physical distancing.
- ✔ Develop a facility use schedule that allows adequate time for the required sanitation to be done between each activity/user group and as frequently as necessary to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread.
- ✔ Close locker rooms; athletes, coaches and others should arrive at the pool dressed and ready to enter the pool (swimsuits under clothes). No use of facility lockers or storage for participant equipment or personal items.
- ✔ Prevent use of low ventilated spaces.
- ✔ Design planned access to washroom facilities and limit them to essential use.
- ✔ Design a planned flow and movement of people in the facility using floor markings and signage (out of the water).
- ✔ Planned use (including distancing diagrams and flow patterns) of the pool space to ensure an appropriate physical distance can be maintained at all times (minimum of 2 metres but may need to be greater depending on the exertion level and training being done).
- ✔ Markings on the pool deck to identify individual areas for athlete and coaches that respect the physical distancing requirements and provide each individual with their own space and that do not require one individual to walk through another person’s space to get to their space.

Cleaning, Hygiene and Sanitation

Surfaces frequently touched with hands are most likely to be contaminated. These include door-knobs, handrails, elevator buttons, light switches, cabinet handles, faucet handles, tables, countertops and electronics. The COVID-19 virus has been shown to last on glass and hard plastics for between 2-5 days, metal for 3-5 days and wood 4 days without washing and sanitizing.

Coronaviruses are one of the easiest types of viruses to kill with the [appropriate disinfectant](#) product when used according to the label directions.

General Risk Mitigation Strategies Checklist for Cleaning, Hygiene and Sanitation

- ✔ To ensure the disease is killed in swimming pool water aquatic facility operators should ensure water testing takes place as required by regulation or more frequently if required by protocols established by the facility.
- ✔ Restrict activities to areas with a high level of ventilation (poor ventilation has been attributed to COVID-19 airborne spread).
- ✔ Have available touchless hand disinfection /soap-water stations throughout the facility.



- ✔ Develop a facility use schedule that allows adequate time for the required sanitation to be done between each activity/user group and as frequently as necessary to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread.
- ✔ Ensure all no-touch fixtures in restrooms are working properly (faucets, soap dispenser, hand dryer, toilet flushing functions).
- ✔ Have standard operating procedures (SOP) for cleaning and disinfecting that frequently and effectively eliminates any viruses from public spaces and surfaces. Identify high traffic areas and disinfect these areas more frequently.
- ✔ A detail cleaning log is kept and posted.
- ✔ Ensure easy access (no touch) to garbage cans for disposal of tissues, wipes etc.
- ✔ No lost and found. All items left behind are disposed of.
- ✔ Disinfect all equipment between user groups (railings, door handles).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUILDING YOUR PLAN

The return to artistic swimming should only be initiated once municipal, provincial and federal regulations permit the resumption of this type of activity and with approval from your PTSO. All the health, safety and strategies to mitigate risk must be adhered to. This step should involve only one training session per day per training group.

Participants

Attention needs to be paid to the ability of participants to be able to follow all of the recommendations, so age and level of artistic swimmer should be limited to participants capable of independently adhering to the recommendations and strategies to mitigate risk.

Group Size

Group size must fall within any group gathering limitations that are in effect locally, including any PTSO and facility group size limitations.

Risk Assessment

Complete a "Risk Assessment" prior to the start of returning to training and following the completion of each week of training. Ensure any issues or recommendations are actioned before the start of any training. A sample Risk Assessment tool is found in Appendix 1.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Update your EAP to include a COVID-19 facility plans to exit everyone from the venue in a way that respects physical distancing if it is safe to do so.

Safe Sport

Your return to sport program must be designed to ensure all aspects of a safe sport environment can be implemented and followed. Open and observable training environments should be maintained at all times, with the Rule of Two applied. This includes any training or communication done virtually.

Additional Resources:

Coaching Association of Canada - [Three Steps to Responsible Coaching](#)
 Canada Artistic Swimming - [Safe Sport](#)



Conduct Policy

Consider updating your Conduct Policy to include following the communicated protocols/processes for preventing the spread of COVID-19 and the consequences for not following them (for coaches, athletes, parents).

Registration

Ensure all coaches and athletes are duly registered in accordance with CAS and their PTSO policies and that all fees have been paid and they have submitted any and all forms required by their PTSO and/or Club.

Club Fees and Refund Policies

- ➔ Consider online payment or no contact payment methods only.
- ➔ Develop and communicate (in a virtual meeting and in writing) the payment policies, processes and timelines.
- ➔ Determine Refund Policies - If the season is shortened or unable to be completed.
 - ➔ What fees are refundable and non-refundable?
 - ➔ Under what circumstances will refunds be provided (e.g. If an athlete contracts COVID-19, If an athlete is unable to practice due to family quarantine) and what kind of documentation will be required?
 - ➔ How will the amount of the refund be determined?

Communications

A return to training plan needs to have a communication strategy and plan that includes regular communication and education with key stakeholders including athletes, coaches and others.

- ➔ **Communicate early and often.**
- ➔ **Designate a COVID-19 Communication Person:** Each Club must have a designated person in place prior to returning to artistic swimming in the pool who is responsible for the COVID-19 portfolio and are the primary point of contact for all COVID-19 related matters:
 - ➔ Staying up-to-date on all COVID-19 related information being provided by various organizations (public health, provincial and municipal governments, venues etc.) by monitoring provincial and local government websites for daily updates or changes to health guidelines.
 - ➔ Responding to COVID-19 concerns. All participants should know who this person is and how to contact them.
 - ➔ Leading and managing all internal communications (athletes, parents, club coaches, board of directors).
 - ➔ Leading and managing all external communications (facility, PTSO, public health, government officials, general public).
- ➔ **Educate and Inform your stakeholders.** Host information sessions online prior to restarting to educate all stakeholders - club executives, coaches, athletes, and parents so that they:
 - ➔ Are familiar with the risks and how COVID-19 spreads, the steps that participants in artistic swimming activity can take to stay healthy and prevent spreading infection.
 - ➔ Clearly understand how the training will be executed and what the expectations are for athletes, coaches and parents, as well as the consequences for not following the policies, guidelines and directives.
 - ➔ Understand and commit to the physical distancing rules, and how they will be applied in the venue and during training.



- ➔ Understand and commit to hygiene best practices, and prohibitions on sharing of equipment, water bottles, nose clips, towels, etc.
- ➔ Commit to preventing the spread of COVID-19 by communicating immediately to the COVID-19 lead if they or someone in their family feels sick, or has symptoms of COVID-19.
- ➔ Understand and can execute the Emergency Action Plan.
- ➔ **Conduct formal training** for all staff, coaches, instructors and volunteers on new procedures and protocols. Provide a check list they can use to assess the training environment before each group enters the facility for training.
- ➔ **Keep meticulous logs** of users by date and time in case they need to be reached for “contact tracing”.

Daily Individual Health Monitoring

- ➔ All athletes, coaches and anyone else who will take part in artistic swimming training environment (“participants”) should always self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. The Government of Canada [COVID-19 Self-assessment Tool is available here](#).
- ➔ Athletes, coaches, and staff must complete a **mandatory daily health assessment questionnaire online prior to arriving at the facility** and must answer ‘NO’ to the following questions prior to attending any training session:
 - ➔ Do I have any of the symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, difficult breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, abnormal muscle pain, headache, sore throat, painful swallowing, runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, gastrointestinal illness?
 - ➔ Have I returned from a trip outside the country within the last 2 weeks?
 - ➔ Have I been in contact with or cared for someone with COVID-19?
 - ➔ Have stayed home when sick, even with mild symptoms
- ➔ “Temperature check” for everyone as part of the visual health check assessment prior to entering the facility is recommended.
- ➔ Staff or athletes at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are recommended to review their specific health concerns with their primary care provider prior to attending training sessions.
- ➔ Have available on deck, pool side a First Aid kit and Personal Protective Equipment (e.g., gloves, masks, eye protection, hand sanitizer, paper towel, tissues, etc.). in the case that a minor injury must be managed by the coaches.
- ➔ Have readily available information about how participants can access the healthcare system virtually, or in person.

Training and Physical Distancing

- ➔ **Physical distancing of a minimum of 2 metres** must always be maintained at all times in all facility locations, including in the pool.
- ➔ Limit the number of people in the facility in accordance with municipal and provincial gathering restrictions.
- ➔ Athletes and coaches are to be separated into self-contained training groups or teams, to limit transmission, keep the same group of athletes for each training session.
- ➔ The size of training groups will be determined by the available pool space and the ability to maintain the physical distancing that is appropriate for the degree of exertion associated with training.



- ➔ An arrival schedule should be developed to coordinate the timing for coach and athlete arrivals. Individuals are to arrive on time at their prescribed arrival time.
- ➔ Athletes must arrive at the pool ready to train (swimsuit under their clothes) and must depart immediately after training “Get in-Train-Get out”.
- ➔ Respect and follow facility rules and regulations

Training and Equipment Use

- ➔ Athletes are not permitted to share any training equipment.
- ➔ Ensure athletes use a large enough yoga mat to eliminate contact between them and the pool deck when stretching or warming up.
- ➔ A plan needs to be developed for the use of music system during training. Only one individual using their personal I-pod can work the music at a time. All music equipment must be disinfected between users.
- ➔ Personal items and clothing (backpacks, jackets, shoes, etc.) brought in by athletes, coaches, and staff should be kept to a minimum. Where bags must be brought in, they should be stored separately, with adequate space between each member’s items (re: backpacks left 2 metres apart along pool deck).
- ➔ Coaches should not use whiteboards so that swimmers do not congregate around them, unless physical distancing measures can be applied (large board, big printing).

Training and Hygiene

- ➔ Upon arrival, athletes, coaches, and staff must wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (>60% alcohol) for at least 20 seconds.
- ➔ Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- ➔ Cover mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of elbow when sneezing or coughing.
- ➔ Do not share food and drinks.
- ➔ Do not share water bottles. All water bottles must be easily identifiable. Athletes, coaches, and staff are required to fill their personal water bottles at home, prior to a leaving for the facility unless they have access to a touchless water bottle filler in the facility.
- ➔ At this time, public health authorities are advising against physical therapy treatments, which includes hands-on services provided by massage therapists physiotherapists, chiropractors, athletic therapists and strength and conditioning practitioners.
- ➔ Ensure participants have appropriate deck footwear that is worn at all times, except when in the water, to limit contact between feet and the deck.
- ➔ Upon arriving at home athletes and coaches should remove their clothing, place it in the washing machine, along with their swimsuit and towel, and wash everything using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C).

DEVELOPPING YOUR TRAINING PLAN

- ➔ Coaches and athletes must recognize the potential health implication of reduced training volumes experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many athletes will have experienced diminished capacity in many areas. To reduce the risk of injury, it is advisable to begin with a gradual resumption of training.
- ➔ **STEP ONE** is a gradual return to the water. The focus of training is individual athlete training. See Appendix 2 for a sample Return to the Water Training framework.



- ➔ Incorporate the “return to the water plan” into a periodized, annual training plan. Factor in how many hours of pool time are able to be accessed and how that will that impact training volume and intensity over periods of time, as seasonal plans are developed.
- ➔ Determine the “minimum” coaching plan required to support the training plan
- ➔ Create a plan for appropriate warm up/activation and post training cool down/recovery.
 - ➔ All warm-ups and cool down protocols must adhere to the physical distancing rules.
 - ➔ Athletes must use their own equipment (no sharing of equipment).
- ➔ There is to be NO athlete - athlete contact during training, either on deck or in the pool.
- ➔ Maintain coach-athlete physical distancing during training at all times. Coaches should use verbal cues when instructing students in place of physical contact.
- ➔ Maintain coach-coach distancing at all times. Coaches are not permitted to share hand-held equipment such as stopwatches, tablets, clipboards or pens, with colleagues or others.
- ➔ Use cones on deck to visually divide the pool training space into appropriately sized areas for athletes that respect the required physical distance for a particular activity.
- ➔ Entry and exit into and out of the pool must be staggered or spread out in a manner that respects the physical distancing requirements.
- ➔ **Lap swimming:**
 - ➔ To maintain social distancing of 2 metres, swimmers should swim in the middle of the lane only. If there are no lane markers, swimmers must still maintain physical distancing of 2 metres during lane/laps swimming.
- ➔ **Individual Skills and Solo Training:**
 - ➔ Maintain appropriate physical distancing at all times.
 - ➔ If possible, design the training so that athletes are never facing each other when breathing.
 - ➔ Maintain a physical distance that is appropriate for the level of exertion of the training (greater exertion = heavier breathing and therefore needs a greater physical distance).
- ➔ **Routine training:**
 - ➔ No training of routines in pattern while the physical distancing rules are still in place (land and water).
 - ➔ Consider doing land drilling training outside, ensuring physical distancing is appropriate for the level of exertion of the athletes (the greater the exertion and breathing the larger the physical distance must be between athletes). Consider the air flow/wind currents and set up land drilling in a way that athletes are not downwind from each other.
 - ➔ Considering doing land drilling virtually.
 - ➔ When training routines out of pattern in the water, training must incorporate physical distancing that is appropriate for the level of exertion (consider how hard the athletes breathing and which way are they facing). The greater the exertion (and breathing when above the surface) the larger the physical distance must be between athletes.

INSURANCE AND LIABILITY

The ‘return to sport plan’ is not specifically an insurance matter but it is a government matter meaning that all return to play (and return to business) guidelines that the various governments (municipal, provincial or federal) are imposing need to be adhered to / followed.

Insurance companies are not dictating when / how businesses should re-open however, given the changes being made to coverages to reflect COVID-19, the respective insurance broker/company should review any return to play / risk management plans that clubs intend to provide to their members prior to re-opening to provide appropriate feedback.





FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH LINKS

Canada	Nova Scotia
Alberta	Nunavut
British Columbia	Ontario
Manitoba	Prince Edward Island
New Brunswick	Quebec
Newfoundland and Labrador	Saskatchewan
Northwest Territories	Yukon



PROVINCIAL ARTISTIC SWIMMING LINKS

Alberta Artistic Swimming	Ontario Artistic Swimming
BC Artistic Swimming	Synchro PEI
Manitoba Artistic Swimming	Natation Artistique Québec
Natation Artistique NB Artistic Swimming	Saskatchewan Artistic Swimming
Newfoundland and Labrador Artistic Swimming	Synchro Yukon Association
Nova Scotia Artistic Swimming	



RELEVANT LINKS

Please visit the [Canada Artistic Swimming COVID-19 Resource Hub](#) for additional information.



CONCLUSION

Return to sport in Canada will happen in a “patchwork” fashion and the lifting of restrictions will be at different times and using different steps/phases across the country depending on the evolution of COVID-19 in a particular area of Canada. Canada Artistic Swimming asks the Canadian artistic swimming community to always respect the regulations and directives from all levels of government and public health. Now is the time for our community to be leaders and continue to do our part to control the spread of the virus and keep all Canadians safe. This document has been created to assist member organizations with planning their return to the pool with the health and safety of all individuals being every organization’s priority. At no time should the information in this document be interpreted as superseding or providing the justification for not adhering to government regulations, public health directives or any return to sport guidelines in a community or facility, nor should it stop an organization from implementing whatever strategies are necessary to mitigate risk in their particular situation.

THANK YOU AND TRAIN SAFE!



APPENDIX 1

CLUB RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR RETURN TO SPORT

The Club Risk Assessment Tool for Return to Sport is an Excel spreadsheet that lets clubs calculate risk by answering a few questions.

In order to accurately provide answers to the following risk assessment and mitigation checklist, those responsible must be knowledgeable on the current COVID-19 outbreak. They should reference the daily provincial, local and global COVID-19 situation reports provided by WHO, Health Canada and provincial health authorities.

The tool must be completed in this Excel spreadsheet (see following tabs), as the scores are automatically calculated there.

It must be ensured that this risk assessment is conducted with input from local public health authorities, and preferably personnel with expertise in risk assessment, epidemiology, and infectious disease control measures are included from the initial stages of planning.

For the overall determination, factors under consideration include:

- ☑ The current stage of the COVID-19 outbreak where training is to be and known transmission dynamics
- ☑ The geographical distribution of and number of participants, and their individual risk profile
- ☑ The risk assessment tool
- ☑ The mitigation measures that are currently in place or feasible to implement

It is important to remember that while mitigation measures can reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections, they cannot completely eliminate the threat. It is the Sport Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), Canadian Public Health and WHO's view that all regions with community transmission should seriously restrict gatherings that bring people together and have the potential to amplify disease and support the recommended best practice of physical distancing.

If movement restrictions (provincial, local) and physical distancing measures remain in place, the Risk Assessment may not apply as public health restrictions (e.g. maximum number of people together, quarantine post movement, etc.) take precedence and by their very nature may preclude any training.

This tool was adapted from the WHO Mass Gathering Risk Assessment and Mitigation Check List and the Canadian RATs tool specifically for sport-specific clubs in Canada to conduct a risk assessment and mitigation check list to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission when resuming club based training. Special thanks to Rowing Canada Aviron, in particular Dr. Mike Wilkinson and Jennifer Fitzpatrick, for their leadership in developing the original risk assessment and mitigation check list for rowing clubs across Canada.

➔ [**Download the Club Risk Assessment Tool for Return to Sport**](#)



APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE GRADUAL RETURN TO WATER TRAINING SCHEDULE

As the COVID-19 situation across Canada evolves, conversations are starting to take place about restarting sport. What does this look like for artistic swimmers? This is very likely the first time that your club has been out of the water for this long a time.

As clubs return to some form of structured training and start their new season, a well-designed periodized training plan should start with general preparation, working on building the engine of your athletes with a focus on aerobic conditioning (land and in water), strength, coordination, and flexibility. The duration of this phase is 8-12 weeks depending on the level of athletes your work with:

Learn to Train:	8-12 yrs of age	12 weeks
Train to Train:	11-15 yrs of age	10-12 weeks
Train to Compete:	15-21 yrs of age	8-10 weeks

Before the pandemic, clubs and athletes had different training situations and the amount of time spent in-water could vary between 1 and 29+ hrs./ week. When pools closed and access to water-based training stopped, artistic swimmers became 100% land-based beings (no time in the water). In addition, many clubs replaced water-based training with land-based training. The result of this situation is that athlete's bodies have adapted to being 100% land based.

Returning to the pool after being out of the water for this long presents a challenge for athletes and coaches. Stopping water-based training can significantly affect the bodies adaptation to being in a weightless environment and **this adaptation must be considered when returning to in-water training.**

As such, precautions must be taken to plan for a PROGRESSIVE return to in-water training in the number of hours, the frequency (times/ week) and the activities within the training session.

WEEK 1

20-25 minutes just play

do whatever you want - re-acquaint yourself with the water by floating & diving - get moving with no structure



Finish the 25 minutes with **200 meter** freestyle and backstroke mix



Basic exercises:

- back layout head-first & foot-first travel
- propeller
- reverse propeller
- ballet leg exercises
- front layout head-first & foot-first travel
- front layout support scull
- vertical positions at the wall

WEEK 2

20-25 minutes just play

do whatever you want - re-acquaint yourself with the water by floating & diving - get moving with no structure



Finish the 25 minutes with **400-600 meter** freestyle and backstroke mix



Basic exercises:

- back layout head-first & foot-first travel
- propeller & reverse propeller
- ballet leg exercises
- front layout head-first & foot-first travel
- front layout support scull
- vertical positions at the wall
- vertical positions off the wall at ankles and at knee level - provide individual technical



APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE GRADUAL RETURN TO WATER TRAINING SCHEDULE

WEEK 3

10 minutes play / free



600-1000 meter swimming:

- no time requirement
- attention on technique



- Basic exercises as previous week
- 25-30 minutes vertical positions
- Basic barracuda exercises
- Basic body boost exercises
- 20-30 minutes
- Basic routine skills: kick-pull, eggbeater travel, side flutter, pike entries, simple figures & arms, nothing fast or with any type of speed. Be control of your movements at all times.

WEEK 4

10 minutes play / free



1000-1400 meter swimming:

- no time requirement
- attention on technique



- Basic exercises as previous week
- 25-30 minutes vertical positions
- Basic barracuda exercises
- Basic body boost exercises
- 30-45 minutes of basic routine skills: same as above.

WEEK 5

1200-1600 meter swimming:

- Start sets with time (easy)
- attention on technique



- 25-30 minutes vertical positions
- Basic barracuda exercises
- Basic body boost exercises
- 45-60 minutes of basic routine skills: add in easy speed and quickness basic drills. Start with simple movements. No complex movements

CHOREOGRAPHIES

Clubs and coaches could consider using the choreographies they prepared for the 2019-2020 season as their routines for the 2020-2021 season. By using the same choreographies, this will **free up time** typically allotted to developing the new choreographies and that can be used to **develop energy systems** and spend **focused time on athleticism and technical skills**.



ENDNOTES

- 1 US Department of Health & Human Services. [New coronavirus stable for hours on surfaces](#). March 2020.
- 2 Government of Canada. [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Symptoms and treatment](#)
- 3 [Medical Info for Pan Am Aquatics](#), UANA Sports medical Commission
- 4 CDC is the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) in the USA
- 5 <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks.html?topic=tilelink#self>
- 6 [Canadian Sport Medicine Advisory Committee Update # 12](#), April 1, 2020
- 7 <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/01/825143172/just-keep-moving-and-sometimes-double-your-distance>



REFERENCES

- US Department of Health & Human Services. [New coronavirus stable for hours on surfaces](#). March 2020.
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- [Medical Info for Pan Am Aquatics](#), UANA Sports medical Commission
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- [Canadian Sport Medicine Advisory Committee Update # 12](#), April1, 2020
- <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/01/825143172/just-keep-moving-and-sometimes-double-your-distance>
- [Government of Canada: COVID-19](#)
- [World Health Organization: Coronavirus](#)
- CDC: [What you should know about the Coronavirus to protect your-self and others](#)
- John Hopkins - [What is the Coronavirus](#)
- [Myrtha Pools: COVID-19 Swimming Pool Study](#); Professor Vincenzo Romano Spica, (Professor of Hygiene at the University of Rome "Foro Italico")
- [Canadian COVID-19 Return to High Performance Sport Framework](#)
- [Swimming Canada Return to Swimming Framework](#)
- [Skate Canada Return to Skating Guidelines](#)
- USA Artistic Swimming Back to the Pool
- [USA Swimming Facility Reopening and Messaging](#)
- [Return to the Rinks](#) US Figure Skating, US Ice Rink Association, USA Hockey
- VIA Sport British Columbia [Return to Sport Guidelines for BC](#)
- [A Framework for Reopening our Province](#) - Ontario
- The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment-Executive Summary
- BCRPA - [The Recreation and Parks Sector Guidelines for Restarting Operations](#)
- USFSA [Return to Programs](#)
- Swiss Rugby [Protection Concept for Exit from the Corona-Lockdown and resumption of Sport Activities](#)
- [Physical Distancing Calculator](#)
- [Guidelines on Canoe Kayak Specific Measure Once Activities are permitted by Public Health Authorities](#)

