



Winter Sports Medical Guidelines for COVID-19

Updated 17th March 2020

Status: Pandemic

The OWIA, Snow Australia, NSWIS and VIS are jointly committed to ensuring the health and safety of all winter sports athletes and staff. To this end, these guidelines set out the coordinated steps that we are taking in order to tackle the coronavirus outbreak, alongside expectations that are placed upon you.

For the safety of yourself and others, **these guidelines must be followed at all times.**

OK. So, what is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the name of the disease that is caused by the coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2. This is a new virus recently identified in Wuhan, China from where it has spread to cause the current global pandemic. There are six other types of coronavirus that can infect humans, four of which cause the common cold. The remaining two are no longer active, but in the past were associated with significant illness.

COVID-19 usually causes a mild illness in young healthy individuals, resolving within 14 days. The time from exposure to onset of symptoms (incubation period) is usually 4-5 days. People are most infectious in the 24 hours before they develop symptoms. Spread usually occurs through breathing the same air. Severe illness is more likely to occur in those aged over 70, and in people with other health problems such as smoking or obesity.

These guidelines aim to provide clarity and reduce the risk of transmission for all Winter Sports athletes and staff.

What if I've just come home to Australia from overseas?

- If you have travelled overseas in the past 14 days (ie. anytime since 3 March 2020) you may have an increased risk of carrying the COVID-19 virus.
- The rules about what you should do differ depending on whether you arrived back into Australia before or after midnight on 15 March 2020.

I arrived before midnight on 15 March 2020

- If you arrived home before midnight on 15 March 2020, you need to voluntarily self-isolate as per our previous advice. You shouldn't join training groups, enter training facilities or meet with sport program or coaching staff until your voluntary self-isolation period has been completed and you have remained symptom free for 14 days. You can train outdoors individually but maintain a distance of 1.5m from other people.

I arrived after midnight on 15 March 2020

- **If you arrived after midnight on 15 March 2020, the Australian Government has imposed a mandatory self-isolation period. You must work and train at home, avoiding all OWIA/SA/NSWIS/VIS Offices and affiliated training facilities for a period of 14 days. These rules are a little more restrictive. For the full story go to [Isolation Guidance](#)**
- In short, during the 14 days of isolation, you must stay at home and not go to public places including work, school, childcare, university or public gatherings. Only people who usually live with you should be in the home. Do not see visitors. Ask others who are not in isolation to get food and necessities for you.
- If you are well, there is no need to wear surgical masks at home. If you must leave home, such as to seek medical care, wear a surgical mask. If you don't have a mask, take care to not cough or sneeze on others

What about going outside? Is it OK to go into the garden?

- If you arrived home after midnight on 15 March 2020, you can go into your private garden or courtyard. Wear a surgical mask if there is anyone there who is not also in-home isolation. If you live in an apartment you can go onto your private balcony if you have one. You can go into common garden areas while wearing a surgical mask. Please go quickly through any common areas on your way there.
- You should exercise regularly at home. Options could include floor exercises, yoga, walking around the backyard or using home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bicycle, if you have it. Check in with your Physical Preparation Coach for help with a program you can follow.

What about when my 14 days are up?

- After 14 days you may return to training or work if you are not showing any symptoms.
- If you have a fever or respiratory symptoms, you should call the [Primary Care – Central Patient COVID-19 Triage Hotline – 1800 020 080](#) and email peter.caine@owia.org who can advise on further management.
- If you are unsure what you should do, please phone the OWIA Medical Services Team on 0412 554465 or 0427 790 728. DO NOT come onsite or into the daily training environment if you are unsure of your risk status.

What if I have had contact with a person with COVID-19?

- Person to person spread of coronavirus generally occurs between people who are close contacts with one another. A close contact is typically someone who has been face to face for at least 15 minutes or been in the same closed space for at least 2 hours, with a person that was infectious.
- If you have been identified as a close contact of a person with confirmed COVID-19 infection in Australia, the local public health unit will contact you with advice. You will need to isolate yourself at home for 14 days after contact with the infected person, and to monitor your health and report any symptoms and not come onsite to OWIA/SA/NSWIS/VIS Offices or affiliated training facilities.
- If your contact with the person was casual, as opposed to close, there is a much smaller risk of you being infected. However, as a precaution you must still monitor your health until 14 days after you were last exposed to the infectious person. If you develop symptoms including a fever and/or respiratory signs, please call your GP or the [Primary Care – Central Patient COVID-19 Triage Hotline – 1800 020 080](#)

What if I'm feeling unwell?

- The most common symptoms are fever, cough and shortness of breath. It can be difficult to tell the difference between COVID-19 and other common respiratory illnesses particularly in the early stages.
- If you develop fever, cough, shortness of breath and other symptoms and have travelled overseas in the previous 14 days, you should call your GP or the [Primary Care – Central Patient COVID-19 Triage Hotline – 1800 020 080](#) to organize testing.
- DO NOT come onsite to OWIA/SA/NSWIS/VIS Offices or to the daily training environment.
- Athletes and staff may also contact OWIA Medical Services Team on peter.caine@owia.org for further advice.
- If you do test positive for COVID-19 please contact peter.caine@owia.org. If you return a positive result for COVID-19 you will then be required to isolate with more stringent restrictions. The following link from the Department of Health contains information regarding these guidelines. [Confirmed or suspected case of Coronavirus.](#)

When can I return to my usual work and training following a COVID-19 infection?

- The infection period for the virus will vary from person to person. Mild symptoms in an otherwise healthy individual may resolve over just a few days. Similar to influenza, for an individual with other ongoing health issues, such as a respiratory condition, recovery may take weeks and in severe cases could be potentially fatal.
- If you are well again at the end of 14 days self-isolation, you can resume your normal activities however PRIOR returning to work or your daily training environment you MUST have a medical clearance letter. Contact peter.caine@owia.org if you need further information about this.

Monitoring of COVID-19

- We are monitoring the latest updates regarding COVID-19 from various government sources and will update staff and athletes as appropriate.