



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Playing Youth Sports

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What you need to know

- Stay home if sick.
- Players should bring their own equipment, like gloves and bats, if possible.
- Reduce physical closeness and keep 6 feet of space between players when possible.
- Coaches and spectators should wear a cloth face covering, and decide if players need to wear cloth face coverings.
- Players should clean their hands before and after practices, games, and sharing equipment.

Make a game plan to reduce risk while playing sports

There are a number of actions you can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and reduce the spread while playing sports.

The more people a child or coach interacts with, the closer the physical interaction, the more sharing of equipment there is by multiple players, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. Therefore, risk of COVID-19 spread can be different, depending on the type of activity.

The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in youth sports settings as follows:

- **Lowest Risk:** Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members.
- **Increasing Risk:** Team-based practice.
- **More Risk:** Within-team competition.
- **Even More Risk:** Full competition between teams from the same local geographic area.
- **Highest Risk:** Full competition between teams from different geographic areas.

LOWER RISK

HIGHER RISK



Skill-building drills at home



Team practice



Within-team competition



Competition with teams from your area



Full competition from different areas

Stay safe on and off the field: Tips for kids

Kids can follow these tips to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.

- Stay home if you're sick or have been around others who are sick.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, before and after practices or games and before and after sharing equipment.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.
- Don't spit.
- Bring your own equipment, like gloves and bats, if possible.
- Don't share towels, clothing, or any items used to wipe your face or hands.
- Keep your belongings separated from others, like your gym bag and equipment, when not in use.
- Avoid physical contact, like high fives, handshakes, fist bumps, and hugs.
- Tell a coach or staff member if you don't feel well.



Keep youth athletes safe: Tips for parents and coaches

Reduce physical closeness between players when possible

- Allow players to focus on building individual skills, like batting, dribbling, kicking, and strength training.
- Limit full contact between players to game days (avoid during practice).
- Increase space between players in the practice areas, including on the sideline, dugout, and bench.
- Avoid high fives, handshakes, fist bumps or hugs.



Minimize sharing of equipment or gear

- Encourage players to bring their own equipment, like gloves, balls, and helmets (if possible).
- Clean and disinfect shared items between use.

Limit travel outside of your area

- Consider competing against teams in your local area (neighborhood, town, or community).

Identify small groups and keep them together

- Avoid mixing between groups.
- Stagger the arrival and drop off of each group to limit interaction.
- Have scrimmages within team to limit exposure.

Practice social distancing and use cloth face coverings, when appropriate

- Implement plans to space out spectators by 6 feet at games or competitions. Limit nonessential visitors, spectators, and volunteers.
- Coaches, parents, fans, officials, and sports staff should wear a cloth face covering.
- Don't touch your cloth face covering. If you do, clean your hands.
- Parents, coaches, and sports administrators should decide if the kids need to wear cloth face coverings.
- It's most important to wear a cloth face covering when it's hard to keep 6 feet of space between people.

To learn more, visit [Youth Sports Programs FAQs](#).

Checklist for coaches

- Send a welcome email or call parents and/or players. Inform them about actions that the sports program will take to protect players. Remind them to stay home if sick or if they have been around someone who is sick.
- Be a role model. Wear a cloth face cover and encourage parents, fans, officials, and sports staff to wear one during practices and games.
- Provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to players before and after practice/game, or encourage them to wash their hands with soap and water.
- Educate players about covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow. Discourage spitting.
- Remind players about social distancing and identify markers (signage or tape on floor, if applicable). Encourage your players to focus on building their individual skills and cardiovascular conditioning, so they can limit close contact with other players.
- Check with your sports administrator to make sure they are following cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces on field, court, or play surface (e.g. drinking fountains) at least daily or between use.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment.



To learn more, visit [Considerations for Youth Sports](#).

More Information

[Considerations for Youth Sports](#)

[Youth Sports Program FAQs](#)

[Keep Children Healthy](#)

[Helping Children Cope](#)