WNY COVID Working Group
May 10, 2021

A LETTER TO STUDENT ATHLETES

We are nearing the finish line with COVID. But we have a distance to go. We are asking for your help.

Athletics are important to you. They are also good for your health and your future. But we have to reduce risks.

If you get COVID, you will be off sports for at least 2 weeks. This will affect your whole season. But COVID can affect you longer than that. Many kids have less energy for many weeks more. And unfortunately, sometimes COVID can hurt you permanently.

Here’s what you can do:

- Get vaccine when you can. It is safe, like any other vaccine. It will protect you from spreading COVID.
- Encourage others, including your friends and parents, to get the vaccine. As more and more of us get vaccinated, we get closer to doing the group things we enjoy, like concerts and parties.
- Pay attention to your body. Don’t go anywhere if you are sick, except to get tested. If you compete while sick, other people on your team could get COVID. If enough of your teammates get sick at once, you will have to forfeit games.
- Get tested if you have been exposed to someone who is sick.
- Don’t go to practice or a game if you have a pending test.
- Wear a mask. Masks are important safety equipment. Wear a mask whenever your sport allows their use. It should cover both your nose and mouth. Avoid pulling your mask down, especially when you are near other people. Keep your mask on between activities, such as on the sidelines.
- Remind spectators to wear a mask. Coaches and officials should monitor mask use.
- Wash your hands a lot.
- Arrive at your competition ready to play. Avoid the locker room. If you can’t, minimize locker room time, wear a mask and keep the number of people under 20.
- When traveling, avoid carpooling with people outside your family. Don’t eat meals with other families.
- When you socialize with friends, do it outside.

Keep in mind that indoor sports are riskier. So if you play hockey or wrestle, for example, be extra careful.

You are a valuable member of your team. Let’s make sure that the team continues to have you at your best.
The ILI/COVID Working Group of Western New York was formed in response to local variation in approach to the diagnosis and treatment of Influenza-Like-Illness and COVID-19 in the region. It is a collaborative effort of hospital systems, academic departments, independent practice associations, and insurers. The logos and signatures on this document represent the organizations’ support of this statement.

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