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Coaches' Best Practices Regarding COVID-19

Communicable & Infectious Disease Prevention

1. Obtain certification in communicable disease prevention training.
2. Be equipped to take the temperature of your athletes. (A temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher is cause for concern, and the athlete should be sent home.)
3. Be aware of pre-existing factors that raise the risk of detrimental effects to the body. This includes asthma and diabetes or other such health problems.
4. Ask before and after every practice if any athletes feel feverish or faint, and monitor your team for coughing, excessive sneezing and trouble breathing. Remove from play immediately.
5. Report any of the above observations to parents and your immediate official of your sports organization.
6. Any coach, athlete, official or team member that becomes sick prior to arrival at practice or competition should stay home until symptoms have passed or the individual is tested.
7. Emphasize wearing a cloth mask whenever possible. This includes when arriving, during and after practice or competition. Direct team members to leave immediately after practice.
8. Focus practice time on individual skill development in smaller groups when organizing practice schedules to reduce large team gatherings.
9. Assign "at home" or privately supervised skill development routines (hitting, throwing, shooting, kicking, dribbling, agility, etc.) to limit the number of practice days and the length of a team practice.
10. When conditioning, ensure a 6-foot distance separating team members.
11. Require athletes to keep 6-foot distancing from teammates while recovering or while not actively engaged in drills.
12. Do not allow spitting.
13. Coaches should be aware of maintaining 6 feet or more of distance while using a whistle.
14. Hydrate athletes from daily sanitized receptacles. Encourage athletes to bring their own hydration containers and do not allow sharing.
15. Physical contact (football, basketball, lacrosse, etc.) in preparation for competition should be limited whenever possible, and athletes should be allowed to visit sanitation stations after each physical contact period or session. During competition, athletes should rewash hands whenever possible unless wearing gloves. (Examples: between innings, series or possessions or during timeouts.)
16. Scheduling of competition should be limited to access that does not require team travel.
17. Limit out-of-town exposure by scheduling competition in your home community or immediate neighborhoods.
18. With the youngest athletes, schedule team parents to monitor social distancing and scheduled visits to the sanitation station. Hand sanitizer should contain 60% alcohol.
19. Schedule a "wash-down" of all shared equipment when there is intermittent recovery time.
20. Limit team exposure to non-family visitors, spectators, volunteers and others.

This is a supplemental resource for the CoachSafely™ Communicable & Infectious Diseases education module. Prepared by the CoachSafely Foundation, the information is based on a full review of recommendations presented by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Alabama Department of Public Health and Alabama High School Athletic Association in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in youth sports.

