



## Soccer Return to Play Guidelines

### PT Fundamentals for lower extremity injuries:

1. Ensure full active ROM as compared to the uninvolved
2. Good functional strength
  - a. Able to perform 15 Single Leg Calf Raises with knee extended
  - b. Able to perform 15 Single Leg Step Downs off of 6-8" step with good control of foot/ankle/knee/hip mechanics
3. Good balance
  - a. Able to perform SL landing onto Bosu (flat down) without loss of balance & with good control of foot/ankle/knee/hip mechanics and with no significant increase in pain x10 reps each from forward approach, diagonal approach (~45 degrees) & from lateral approach
  - b. Able to juggle soccer ball x25 touches alternating legs as appropriate without dropping the ball
  - c. Able to collect the ball from chest or opposite leg while standing on affected leg
4. Good tolerance to run/impact progression
  - a. Able to tolerate run progression in AlterG to full body weight x30 minutes without significant increase in symptoms
  - b. Able to tolerate quick feet work in the ladder starting with
    - i. Sagittal plane forward motion
    - ii. Diagonal change of directions
    - iii. Lateral change of direction
  - c. Able to tolerate acceleration/deceleration forward & backward
  - d. Able to tolerate lateral change of directions starting with
    - i. Lateral stepping over cones
    - ii. Slide board
    - iii. Ice skaters laterals
    - iv. Ice skaters diagonals with affected limb forward
    - v. Ice skaters with affected limb back
    - vi. Cariocas
  - e. Able to tolerate progression of change of direction drills & Team Functional Warm-ups
    - i. Slalom (gradual change of direction around cones)
    - ii. Diagonal change of direction starting with 5 steps then 3 steps then 1 steps with shoulder fakes
    - iii. Quick change of direction drills (planting & cutting)
    - iv. "Double fake" maneuvers
5. Good tolerance to power for jumping/heading the ball
  - a. Able to perform DL plyometrics with good form on landing
  - b. Able to perform SL plyometrics with forward landings
  - c. Able to perform SL plyometrics with variable landings
6. Good tolerance to ball handling/dribbling
  - a. Around cones
  - b. Pull backs
  - c. Cross overs

7. Good tolerance to passing
  - a. Two-touch
  - b. One-touch
  - c. Short distances (10 yds) with accuracy & appropriate velocity with laces open then laces closed
  - d. Medium distances (>10 yds to 25 yds) with accuracy & velocity with laces open then closed
  - e. Long balls (Goal kicks, corner kicks, serving – dependent on position & role on the team) with accuracy & appropriate velocity
8. Good tolerance to 50/50 balls
  - a. One-step with known direction & amplitude of force
  - b. One-step with unknown amplitude of force
  - c. Able to tolerate holding one's own position while being bumped or shoulder shoved by an opponent
  - d. Able to tolerate slide tackles (both sliding & impact)
9. Offensive drills – known directions (Ask athlete about style of play)
10. Defensive drills – reactive drills (Ask athlete about style of play)
11. Short field/small goals
12. Full field
13. Goal Keeper Drills
  - a. Can work on diving from kneeling position on large AIREX mat to work on lateral and diagonal dives
  - b. Needs to be able to get up quickly after diving requiring functional end range DF & knee flexion
  - c. Needs to be able to jump up to punch balls or collect balls shot at goal
  - d. Can throw balls out before they need to do goal kicks

### **PT Fundamentals for upper extremity injuries:**

1. If an athlete does not need to take throw-ins and they are not a goalkeeper, they may be able to return to practice/competition before they have full motion/strength.
2. They will need to be able to tolerate upper extremity “jostling” while sprinting, getting bumped/shoulder-shoved while making plays for balls
3. If they will be doing throw-ins, they will need full AROM overhead without impingement & good strength for accurate throw-ins.
4. If they are playing goal keeper, they will need full strength with quick movements overhead, punching balls shot overhead, diving to either side with out-stretched arms and using their upper extremities to get up quickly from the ground. These drills may be started on large AIREX mat