

# Return to football

Due to COVID-19, many student athletes have been forced to forgo normal pre-participation activities, i.e. strength and conditioning camps, and 7-on-7 camps. Below are some exercises that can be performed individually to help gradually prepare you for return to football activities.

It is always a good idea to get a pre-participation physical by your doctor prior to starting a sport. This is particularly important if you have recently had a new injury or change in health status.

Returning to physical activity and conditioning following an extended off-period should include a gradual increase in the time and intensity of exercise, as well as including a timeframe for heat acclimatization. Heat acclimatization typically takes place over a period of 7-14 days. The acclimatization period is most effective after athletes have effectively increased their level of conditioning after they have returned to their pre-COVID baseline.

## Start

- Five-minute jog

## Warm-up

- High knees
- Butt kicks
- High kicks to hand
- Inverted toe touches — standing on one leg, lean forward and try to touch your toes while slowly raising your opposite leg straight behind you
- Side shuffling



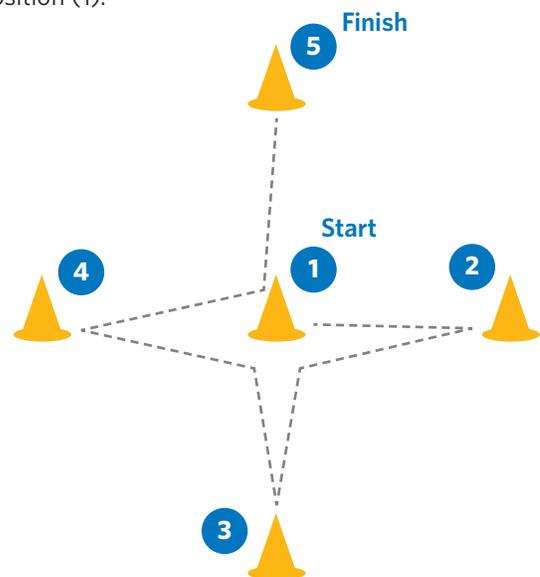
## Strengthening

- Squats — body weight
- Front lunges — walking forward
- Side lunges — back and forth in place
- Bridges
- Push-ups
- Planks
- Tuck jumps
- Mountain Climbers

## Conditioning

### • Drill A "Cross"

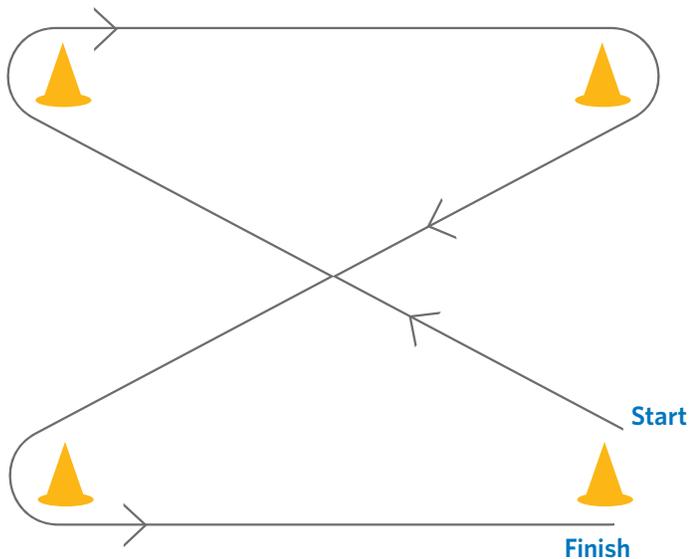
Place cones 10 feet in front, behind and to both sides of your body. Start in the center then (1) Side shuffle to right (2) then back to cone (1). Backpedal to cone (3), sprint to cone (1). Side shuffle to left (4), and back to cone (1). Sprint to the front cone (5) then backpedal to the starting position (1).



## Conditioning

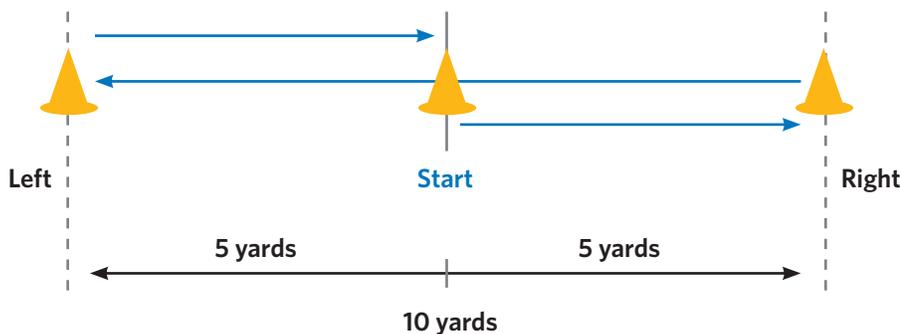
### • Drill B "Rectangle"

Place four cones (or pick four points) in the shape of a rectangle. Start on a corner and run to the opposite corner. Without stopping, cut quickly to the cone just lateral to the cone you ran to. After reaching this cone, cut and run to the cone opposite it. When reaching this cone, cut and run to the starting cone.



### • Pro Agility Drill (5-10-5 Drill):

Position three cones in a straight line 5 yards apart. Start at the center cone in a three-point stance, straddling the start/finish line. Timing starts on your first movement. Sprint 5 yards to the right. Stop and touch the line with your right hand at the cone. Sprint 10 yards to the far cone. Stop and touch the line with your left hand at the cone. Sprint 5 yards through the finish line. This can also be performed starting to the left.



## Cool down

- 10-minute jog



Tailor this routine as needed, decreasing or increasing the number of repetitions performed of each exercise/drill. The goals of this program are to help improve the aerobic endurance and general lower body strength of the athlete; re-integrate the athlete into dynamic sports-specific directional changes; and practice the motor plans required for dynamic/skilled movements.



If you have questions about returning to football safely, please email [DellChildrensSports@ascension.org](mailto:DellChildrensSports@ascension.org)

Additionally, be sure to adhere to your organization's rules on preventing the spread of COVID-19 to ensure the safety of others.