



The risks associated with Netball during COVID-19

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This resource, can be used to share with club and team members to ensure they understand the risks netball poses during COVID-19 pandemic. It is important that members understand this and 'opt in' to activity in full knowledge of the risks.

In every sport and leisure activity, there are risks of COVID-19 and team sports in particular pose slightly increased risks.

COVID-19 can be transmitted in 3 ways;

- Droplet transmission when in close contact with others
- Fomite transmission by sharing of equipment like netballs and bibs
- Airborne transmission which is a risk particularly when indoors

When thinking about netball specifically:

- It is a game that can be fairly static in nature.
- You have 3 seconds to pass the ball, or 4 seconds if you're a walking netball or Bee Netball participant.
- We defend face to face at a 3 foot (0.9m). distance
- A netball is passed by hand continuously around multiple people.
- It is also a game that is often played indoors
- The netball family are a very friendly group and have traditions such as 3 cheers, hand-shakes and high fives in close circles.

All these things combined mean there are regular breaches to social distancing during 'normal' netball that lead to significant periods of time during a training session or netball match that cause increased risk. These breaches would not be allowable in other parts of day to day life currently and is therefore the reason why modifications must be introduced.

Netball therefore carries a greater risk than other activities and as part of the return to community netball, we need to mitigate some of the risks to both protect the netball family, as well as ensure that netball is not responsible for an increased transmission of COVID-19 more broadly. This guidance document covers many of these mitigations.

To ensure that our sport could return, a number of modifications to the rules of netball have also been made. These rules modifications have been created with two key principles in mind;

- To protect the netball family by reducing the incidences where face to face contact at less than 1m distance occurs particular when this is 'non-fleeting' contact (3 seconds or more)
- To maintain a game that is not too far away from the usual rules of netball

The following page details the COVID-19 rule modifications, These modifications have been approved by Public Health England and Government and represent the ONLY allowable form of the game currently.

All involved in netball must familiarise themselves with these rule modifications and they must be utilised in all netball activity.

These COVID-19 rule modifications will be temporary, however it is unknown how long they will be applied in England. Any updates will be shared with England Netball members and posted on the England Netball website.

COVID-19 PERSONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

This information sheet aims to inform you, your family and any other household contacts you might have of underlying medical conditions which could put you at higher risk of contracting Covid-19. We recommend you consider the risk to both yourself and others of returning to any Netball activity and discuss this with your Netball club prior to participation.

People at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable)

- are 70 or older
- have a lung condition that's not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
- have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- have diabetes
- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy)
- have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections
- are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- are very obese (a BMI of 40 or above)

People at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable):

- have had an organ transplant
- are having chemotherapy or antibody treatment for cancer, including immunotherapy
- are having an intense course of radiotherapy (radical radiotherapy) for lung cancer
- are having targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system (such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors)
- have blood or bone marrow cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- have had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or are still taking immunosuppressant medicine
- have been told by a doctor they have a severe lung condition (such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma or severe COPD)
- have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID or sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppressant medicine)
- have a serious heart condition and are pregnant