

Maintaining Fitness During the Quarantine Period – General Overview

With many facilities closed and normal training routines impacted, it is important for you to maintain good health and basic fitness to ensure when pools are open you are ready to train. Below are some guidelines to enable you to maintain fitness. There is no way you can avoid some level of specific detraining at this time, especially when access to pools is not possible. However, you can mitigate this by performing other forms of exercise.

General Guidelines

Swimmers who usually perform 3-4 sessions per week

- 2-3 cardio sessions per week (30-40 min)
- 2 x dryland sessions using body weight exercises, therabands and stretching.

Swimmers who usually perform 5-6 sessions per week

- 3-4 cardio sessions (~45 min)
- 2 x dryland sessions using body weight exercises, therabands and stretching.

Swimmers who usually perform 7-8 sessions per week

- 5-6 cardio sessions (45-60 min)
- 3 x dryland sessions using body weight exercises, therabands and stretching.

Exercise Intensity

Not all sessions you perform need to be done at a high intensity. Like your swimming training, a combination of low-intensity training where you are just able to answer questions with one-word answers, needs to be combined with shorter maximal efforts.

- It is recommended that you keep a training diary during this time, so that you can share with your coach and so you can monitor your progress and help maintain motivation over time.
- Using some form of activity tracker (Garmin, Fitbit, Apple watch etc.) can be helpful to maintain a log of your training, sleep patterns and recovery.

Exercise Type

Not everyone will have access to water (backyard pool, lake, beach etc). It is important that you consider what access you have to equipment eg. a spin bike or treadmills, and most importantly your individual preferences and capabilities.

- If you have access to water eg. a backyard pool or a beach, then some sessions can be performed in the water. This could be a combination of “ins and outs” or swimming continuously parallel to the shore at a beach, or a combination of continuous swimming and interval work using a tethering device in a pool.
- *Note: If considering tethered swimming, ensure you are conservative with your approach and limit the number of efforts per session to less than 50% of the entire session duration. Tethered swimming places 10-20% more load on the tendons around the shoulder joint, so you need to build the amount you do slowly, ensure adequate rest between individual efforts and allow full recovery between sessions by combining this with other exercise modes. Be sure to speak to your coach about how to incorporate tethered swimming into any training program.*
- Other activities may include cycling, running, skipping, bench step-ups or rowing. As with tethered swimming, if any form of exercise is not familiar to you, start slowly and build up time/distance and effort. For example, running may initially consist of 4 min jog, 1 min walk, repeated four times. This can be slowly increase until 30-40 min of continuous running can be maintained.
- It is recommended you use a combination of the different exercise modes to prevent over-use injuries and to provide variety. If you cycle outside, consider combining longer flat rides with shorter hilly rides. Other possibilities include setting up a circuit consisting of skipping, bench step ups, a stationary bike and repeated sprints.
- Share your ideas with your fellow team-mates for variations and encouragement. Regardless of exercise mode, ensure you maintain good technique, wear appropriate footwear, and make sure your bike position is appropriate if cycling.