

REBOOTING SPORT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Isolation and lockdown introduced unprecedented changes to high performance sport in Australia. Recommencing sport will require a period of adjustment for athletes, coaches, staff and organisations.



Possible responses to returning to sport

- > Feeling stressed or uncertain, e.g. concern for safety, hygiene and new conditions.
- > Excitement about returning to training, competition and re-engaging with others.
- > A sense of urgency to make up for lost time.
- > Feeling frustrated or unmotivated due to changes in training and competition.
- > Mixed responses - feeling guilty about leaving loved ones, but excited about preparing for competition.



Ways to support yourself

- > Be realistic. It will take time to return to your previous routines and pace of living.
- > Prepare yourself for re-entry to the high performance environment by answering these questions:
 - What is most important for my return? e.g. knowing how we can train within the return guidelines, clarifying priorities and needs with my coach/manager.
 - Who are the important people that are involved in my return?
 - What practical and wellbeing strategies do I need to implement?
- > For athletes, review your Individual Performance Plan with your relevant performance staff, make adjustments if required.
- > For staff, have a clear agreement with your manager on current priorities and what your return needs are.
- > Practice self-care by doing things that have worked for you that are consistent with current health guidelines, e.g. eating well, following routine, meditating, doing things you enjoy.



Ways to support others

- > Others may have had a different experience and response to COVID 19; practice being supportive and non-judgmental.
- > Reconnect with your teammates, coaches and HP staff.
- > Be a role model by abiding by the return guidelines.
- > Be aware of ongoing uncharacteristic moods or behaviours of others. Check in and ask if they would like to be connected with professional support.



Support and when to seek additional help

A level of uncertainty over returning to the high performance environment is completely normal. If emotional difficulties continue to impact everyday life without responding to these strategies, a trained professional may be able to help including:

- > A Psychologist (through your sport, institute, academy or you may engage a Sports Psychologist privately).
- > The AIS Mental Health Referral Network for eligible high performance athletes and staff.

For more information, refer to the [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport](#)

AIS Mental Health Referral Network



[AIS.gov.au/mhrn](https://ais.gov.au/mhrn)



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