EXERCISING AFTER COVID

COVID-19 AND THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

- COVID-19 starts with a cell invasion that has been linked to the virus attaching to the fine hairs found in your nose as well as attaching to cells in your mouth. Once the virus has attached it will start active replication in the upper respiratory system including the nasal cavities, pharynx, and larynx. Acute respiratory distress shows up 10 days after critical onset
- 80% of individuals who contract the virus will only experience minor symptoms which include fever, cough, and loss of taste and smell. Most individuals won't have respiratory distress until 10 days after the onset of the virus

EXERCISING AFTER CONTRACTING THE VIRUS

- A patient's lungs can go back to normal after contracting the virus, however, it is not an overnight fix. The lungs will begin to heal and develop scar tissue, it will then take six months to a year for the scar tissue that has developed to fully heal and allow the patient to get back to normal oxygen levels. Before getting back to working out make sure you consult with your primary care provider for personal instructions for exercise and your body
- When you return to exercise try to limit your alcohol and tobacco consumption, make sure to eat healthy meals, try not to skip meals, drink plenty of water, and maintain a healthy sleep schedule to help your body in healing
- Drinking alcohol does not protect you from COVID-19 and can become dangerous, the harmful use of alcohol will increase your health risks

RECOMMENDED EXERCISES

- After you contract COVID-19 you will be able to get back to your daily activities, however, it will take time for your body to heal. Make sure to not push yourself once you're out of isolation as your body needs time to heal.
- When returning to the gym you should be working out at 50% of your usual intensity, taking it slow and gradually working back up to your normal intensity.
- Make sure to stay hydrated, take breaks when you need, monitor your body, and contact your primary care provider if you have an existing pulmonary condition before returning to the gym.
- Some individuals may feel dizzy or light-headed when returning to the gym and working out in a mask, try not to panic and pull your mask down right away. Take a break and try to slow down your exercises until the symptoms subside. If you feel you need to take your mask off, make sure you are six feet away from anyone.
- Try to avoid any exercise that is demanding of your cardiovascular system, like HIIT, they may feel more difficult and may cause more symptoms of dizziness and light headedness.
- Make sure to keep up with CDC guidelines including washing your hands regularly, trying to stay six feet away from other participants, try to avoid face touching, and bring multiple masks or cloth masks made with moisture wicking fabric as wet masks can grow bacteria on them due to sweat.

SOURCES

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