

RETURN TO SPORT PROGRESSION: Soccer

The athlete must pass all functional tests and/or be cleared by sports medicine medical provider before beginning Return to Soccer Protocol. Recommend pursuing Transitional Therapy for return to sport activities during this phase. Transitional Therapy is a strength and conditioning program that is led by medical professionals with a sports medicine background with the goal of transitioning from therapy back to sport. The athlete may progress through the phases as tolerated. Cross-training can be performed on off days. (Cross training can be done by performing non sport specific activities i.e. swimming, biking, yoga, and/or PT home exercises, see attached instructions). The home exercises and training activities in each phase are a comprehensive guideline, it is not necessary to complete every activity and/or exercise on the day you are training. The athlete should pick 1-2 activities or exercises per section to avoid over training. Each phase should be performed 2-3 times with one day rest between each session, the athlete should progress to the next phase once he/she is able to complete the current phase without pain, swelling, decreased range of motion or difficulty. If the athlete experiences pain, swelling, decreased range of motion or difficulty during a phase, he/she should take a day off and go back to the prior phase where they were not experiencing pain and or difficulty completing activities. Do not keep moving through the phases if you are having pain or difficulty. Seek medical attention if necessary. The athlete should ice the affected area for 15-20 minutes following the activity.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Begin on field running drills	•	•	•	•	•
Progress running and ball drills (Non-contact)		•	•	•	•
Team practice (Light contact)			•	•	•
Team scrimmage (Contact)				•	•
Games/ competition					•
Tournaments (back to back games)					***
Playing time	Begin with playing 10-15 minutes at a time during team scrimmage. Progressively increase your playing time as you tolerate. *** You may return to tournaments if two games can be played back to back days without pain/ limitation.				

Warm Up to be Performed Before Each Session:

- **Foam Rolling:** Large lower extremity muscle groups or specific areas of focus as instructed by Physical Therapist.
- **Dynamic Warm Up:** Walking quadriceps stretch, walking hamstring stretch, inchworm walkouts, ½ kneel ankle rocking, forward lunges to 18 yard box, lateral lunge to 18 yard box, high knees, power skips, lateral shuffles to 18 yard box

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Phase 1: Begin on Field Running and Soccer Drills:

- **Running:** Jog to midfield and back. $\frac{3}{4}$ speed sprint to midfield, down and back. Line touches at $\frac{3}{4}$ speed (6 yds, 18 yds, midfield)
- **Agility/Jumping/Landing:** Diagonal forward leaps, 18 yard box and back. Agility cone & ladder drills at $\frac{3}{4}$ speed (Emphasis on good acceleration and deceleration not cutting and sprinting; Figure 8, X-Lane Drill, M Drill, Zig Zag, and T Drill; *See attached sheet for agility drills descriptions)
- **Dribbling:** $\frac{1}{2}$ speed straight plane dribbling forward inside 18 yard box

Phase 2: Progression of on Field Running and Soccer Training (Non-Contact):

- **Running:** Jog full field and back 2x. $\frac{3}{4}$ speed sprint full field, down and back 2x. Full speed sprint full field, down and back 2x. Line touches at full speed (6 yds, 18 yds, midfield, full field)
- **Agility/Jumping/Landing:** Diagonal forward leaps, 18 yard box and back. Agility cone & ladder drills (Figure 8, X-Lane Drill, M Drill, Zig Zag, and T Drill)
- **Passing with a Teammate:** Begin passing at 50% effort. Short distance passes (6 yds) [Passing on ground 4x10 passes; Volley in the air (inside and laces) 4x 5 passes]. Longer distances (18 yds+)[Passing on ground 4x 10 passes; Controlling a ball from long distance pass]
- **Dribbling:** $\frac{1}{2}$ speed dribbling; beginning at half length of field, progressing to full length of field (Straight-line ball control 2x; Forward/backward turns 2x; Instep ball control 2x; Outstep ball control 2x)
- **Juggling Drills:** Juggling with good ball control on both feet for 5 minutes

Phase 3: Return to Practice and Continued Conditioning (Light Contact):

- **Running:** Begin interval training (jog for 1 minute, then sprint for 30 seconds). Jog full field and back 2x. Jogging high knees to midfield 2x. $\frac{3}{4}$ speed sprint full field, down and back 2x. Full speed sprint full field, down and back 2x. Line touches at full speed (6 yds, 18 yds, midfield, full field) 2x
- **Agility/Jumping:** See agility and jumping on PT home exercises. Diagonal forward leaps, midfield and back. Agility ladder drills (Figure 8, X-Lane Drill, M Drill, Zig Zag Drill, and T Drills)
- **Passing with a Teammate:** *Increasing velocity on passes to 75% effort.* Short distance passes (6 yds) [Passing on ground while moving 4x10 passes - 2x; Quick feet with Volley 4x 5 passes - 2x; Lateral shuffle to ball pass cone drill (5ft apart) - 2x]. Longer distances (18 yds+) [Passing on ground 4x 10 passes; Controlling a ball from long distance pass; Long distance soccer ball passing including crossing the ball and free kicks/ corner kicks]
- **Dribbling:** Full speed dribbling full length of field, introducing lateral dribbling. Straight-line ball control 2x. Forward/backward turns 2x. Instep ball control 2x. Outstep ball control 2x. Lateral dribbling movements (Increasing/ decreasing speed while dribbling; Side movement with the ball, changing direction on command). Keep away with teammate in 6 yard box with light tackling(1v1 and 2v1 drills with teammates at 75% effort)
- **Juggling Drills:** Good ball control on both feet for 10 minutes.
- **Practice with Team:**
 - 1) Begin with walk-throughs on offense and defense
 - 2) Warm up, drills, running, practice light tackles, no scrimmage
 - 3) Full practice including team scrimmage at end of practice

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Phase 4: Progression to Practice (Contact):

- Continue with Phase 3 Running, Agility/ Jumping, Passing, Dribbling, exercises as outlined above in Phase 3. Continue with conditioning for up to 60 minutes. Continue with PT home exercises for strength, power, balance, and proprioception. Practice team passing and kicking drills, practice offensive, defensive and counter attack tactical schemes. Begin full practice including team scrimmage at end of practice. Continue building confidence in team practice. Begin to have conversation with coach about starting to play in games. Contact practice for at least 1 full week without any pain, difficulty, or complications to progress to Phase 5.

Phase 5: Progression Back to Game:

- Continue with Phase 3 Running, Agility/ Jumping, Passing, Dribbling exercises as outlined above in Phase 3. Continue with conditioning for up to 60 minutes. Continue with PT home exercises for strength, power, balance, and proprioception.
- Playing in game with team: Progression:
 - 1) Warm up, drills, running/ sprinting, **playing half of game**. Begin with playing ½ first half, and ½ of second half. Progress to playing longer during each half
 - 2) **Full games** not back to back same day games (tournaments)
 - 3) Return to full prior level of competition and tournaments

Lower Extremity PT Exercises for Home:

Disclaimer: the athlete should pick 1-2 exercises per section to avoid over training.				
	Exercises	Sets	Repetitions	Comments/ Modifications:
	Jumping/ Landing:			
	• Double/single leg toe drop			
	• Double leg jump prep			
	Power:			
	• Squat jump			
	• Broad jump			
	• Box jump			
	• Forward leaps			
	• Bounding			
	• Scissor jumps			
	• Hurdle hops			
	Strength:			
	Core			
	• Quad hover			
	• Plank			
	• Side plank			
	• Bear crawls			

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Hip/ Glutes			
• Bridge			
• Clamshells			
• Band walks			
• Squats			
• Lateral lunge			
Quadriceps			
• Squats			
• Split squats			
• Lunges			
• Leg Press			
Hamstrings			
• Bridge walkouts			
• Nordic Hamstring exercise			
• RDL			
Balance/ Proprioception			
Double leg (DL), Single leg (SL)			
Eyes open (EO), Eyes closed (EC)			
• DL squat EO/EC			
• DL squat to SL hold EO/EC			
• DL and SL toe drops EO/EC			
• SL balance EC			
• SL balance 3 way cone reach			

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AGILITY DRILLS

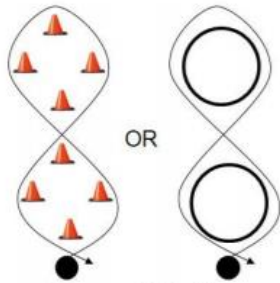
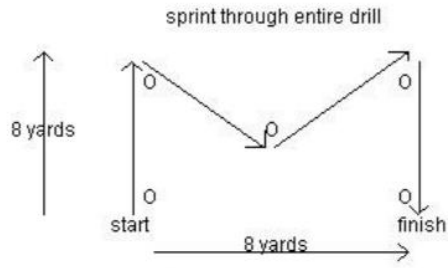
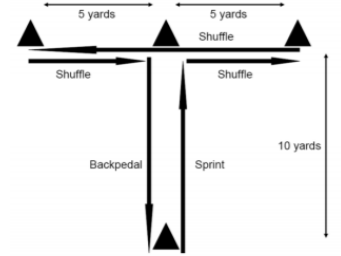


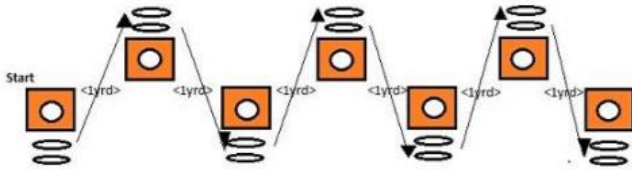
Figure 8 Drill



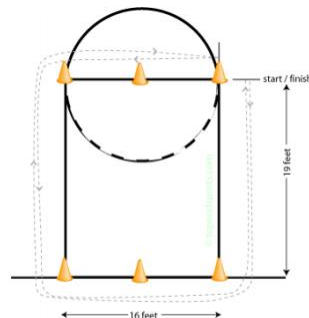
M Drill



T Drill



Zig Zag Drill



X Lane Drill: Sprint, side shuffle, back pedal, side shuffle