



ONTARIO SKI TEAM RETURN TO SNOW POLICY

Created: July 2018 | Revised: June 2019

General:

Alpine Ontario takes the health and safety of athletes in our care very seriously. This applies to injury prevention, and return to sport in the event of injury. The Ontario Ski Team (OST) IST or “Integrated Support Team” consists of relevant medical professionals, Sports Science and Strength & Conditioning Consultants, and OST coaches. The IST will determine an athletes’ preparedness to return to sport by following the protocol below. AOA does not employ medical staff. However, clearance for each of the steps below must be approved by the relevant IST members. The specific tests used by IST members for each stage of clearance will be decided on a case by case basis as per the nature of each individual injury, and the guidelines below. AOA or OST staff will do our utmost to facilitate access to surgeons, physicians, and therapists as required or appropriate. OST staff may require clearance from a physician and/or therapist of our choosing.

Return to Snow Protocol

After sustaining an injury requiring removal from the competitive environment, all Alpine Ontario athletes will follow the proposed return to sport protocol. Specific concussion protocols are outlined in the *Alpine Ontario Concussion Protocol*. No clearance to return to sport should be undertaken until all 5 steps outlined below are completed. In following the proposed outline for return to competition, the athlete, and relevant IST members (therapist, physician, etc. where appropriate or possible) should meet or communicate regularly to ensure appropriate progression both from the time of injury to return to snow, and from return to snow to full return to competition. The medical support staff, OST coaches and support staff will continue to be involved (as appropriate) in the return to competition process, which will be discussed with the Athlete and coaching staff to ensure appropriate monitoring and progression.

STEP 1: Medical Clearance From a medical perspective (e.g. healing of fractures, recovery from surgery, recovery from concussion) the athlete must be cleared by a Sports Med physician and relevant orthopedic surgeons/ specialist, before moving onto the next steps of physiotherapy, strength and conditioning, and return to snow training.

STEP 2: Physiotherapy Clearance The athlete must be cleared by a physiotherapist when the athlete's physical rehabilitation from the injury/surgery is complete and he/she can proceed with sport specific and full reconditioning or return to snow training. This step is taken in conjunction with a Physician, Conditioning Coach and OST Coaching Staff.

STEP 3: Sport Science / Strength and Conditioning Clearance (Consultant, Sport Science and Strength & Conditioning Coach Melissa Lacroix at CSIO, Mental Performance Consultant – as required)

The athlete must receive clearance from AOA lead Strength and Conditioning coach when physical assessment milestones/testing parameters are met and all dryland sport-specific exercises can be performed pain free to a level equal to or better than pre-injury results. Psychological assessment will be performed as required, and athlete deemed fit to return to snow. This step is taken in conjunction with Lead Therapist and coaching staff.

STEP 4: Coaching Staff and Coach Sign Off Once the athlete has received clearance from the relevant members of the Integrated Support Team (IST), a final pre return to snow meeting will occur between the IST and coaching staff. The coaching staff have a final sign off on the return to snow camp. Attention is given to return to snow staff, location, expected snow conditions, and guidelines for on snow training volumes.

STEP 5: Ongoing Return to Snow Monitoring: Ongoing monitoring including regular Coach-IST meetings will occur throughout the return to snow period. This ensures the athlete continues to progress with rehabilitative outcomes throughout return to snow.

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that the above process has been followed to ensure the safest, most appropriate return to sport. Questions or concerns regarding the process have been answered and the Athlete (undersigned), IST and coaching staff are in agreement to progress full return to sport.

ATHLETE: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WITNESS: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____