

NFL/NFLPA COVID-19 TESTING & TREATMENT PROTOCOLS



One of the key strategies the NFL and NFLPA are utilizing during the 2020 season to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is a testing program to help identify, treat and isolate infected individuals.

To perform the testing, the NFL and NFLPA have partnered with BioReference Laboratories (BRL), which uses a national system of laboratories separate from local health care resources. The tests they are performing are the most sensitive, reliable and accurate tests available with a 24-hour turnaround time for results.

TESTING PROTOCOL

Testing is just one component of the comprehensive effort to mitigate risk of COVID-19 during the 2020 season. Other efforts include the overhaul of club facilities to accommodate physical distancing, around-the-clock cleaning and disinfection, a modernized system of contact tracing, and behavior-based changes, like virtual meetings, mask-wearing and avoiding large gatherings.

TEST TYPES

Three types of tests are being used:

- » **1) Molecular tests (PCR tests):**
To quickly identify active infections in the team environment and help limit the spread of COVID-19, these mandatory tests were used for Intake Testing and are being used for daily Monitoring Testing. These tests have a 24-hour turnaround time for results.
- » **2) Point-of-care tests (POC):**
Also used to quickly identify active infections in the team environment and help limit the spread of COVID-19, these tests are part of the confirmatory testing process (after an initial positive PCR test) and are part of the Post-Exposure COVID Procedures for any club that may be experiencing an outbreak or had exposure to a club with an active outbreak.
- » **3) Antibody tests for COVID-19 exposure:**
These tests, which are voluntary, are used to indicate prior infection with the COVID-19 virus. Players who are positive for antibodies receive additional cardiac screening.

TIER DESIGNATIONS & TESTING SCHEDULE

Keeping players and personnel protected from the virus is the number one priority of the NFL and NFLPA's joint protocols. Not all individuals require the same level of access, therefore all club personnel have been assigned a tier designation and corresponding testing schedule.

- » **Tier 1:** Players and essential football personnel whose job function requires direct access to players for more than 10 minutes at a time on a regular basis.
- » **Tier 2:** Essential personnel who may need to be in close proximity to players and other Tier 1 Individuals and who may need to access Restricted Areas periodically.
- » **Tier 3:** Individuals who do not require close proximity to Tier 1 individuals, but perform essential facility, stadium or event services.

- » **INTAKE TESTING:** Individuals in **all tiers** underwent multi-day tests in order to gain access to the facility for training camp.
- » **ONGOING MONITORING & SCREENING:**
Tier 1 and 2 individuals will continue to be tested daily into the regular season. Players will be tested the day before games to determine their eligibility to play. **Tier 3** individuals are tested on a weekly basis.

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INTAKE TESTING

Before any player or personnel was allowed access to club facilities for training camp, they underwent multi-day tests. Only individuals that tested negative for all tests conducted were allowed to enter the club facility.



ONGOING MONITORING TESTING AND SCREENING

Tier 1 and 2 individuals will continue to be tested daily into the regular season. Players will be tested the day before games to determine their eligibility to play. Tier 3 individuals are tested once per week.

COVID IR

Players on the COVID IR list include those who have tested positive for COVID-19 AND who have had a close contact exposure to someone with COVID-19.

++ Confirmatory Testing: If a player, Tier 1 or Tier 2 individual with no known history of COVID infection (based on a documented PCR test) receives a new positive test result and is asymptomatic then that individual shall receive two confirmatory tests on the day following the positive test result. The tested individual is immediately placed on the COVID IR list and must remain out of the facility and isolate at home until the confirmatory test results return. If both confirmatory tests are negative, then the individual is not considered COVID positive and may resume all normal activity, including access to the facility.

++ Screening: In addition to Ongoing Monitoring Testing, players and club personnel are thoroughly screened every time they enter a club facility. These individuals will undergo a temperature check and will be required to fill out a COVID-19 questionnaire, which asks if the individual has experienced any COVID-19 symptoms in the preceding 48 hours (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, fever, etc.). The questionnaire also asks players and personnel if they have come into contact with anyone who has had, or been exposed to a positive COVID-19 individual in the past 14 days.

TREATMENT PROTOCOL

When a player tests positive, he is immediately not permitted to travel with the team, access club facilities, or have direct contact with any other players or club staff.



NO travel permitted



NO access to any Club facility



NO direct contact with any other Club employees or players other than the medical staff



TREATMENT PROTOCOL

FOLLOWING A POSITIVE TEST, BUT ASYMPTOMATIC

An asymptomatic player who tests positive for COVID-19 can be cleared by his team physician to return to team activities after:

- » **1)** Ten days have passed since the positive test
- » **OR 2)** The player has tested negatively twice at least 24 hours apart.

- » **Cardiac screening:** Players who have tested positive and recovered or who have tested positive for antibodies will undergo additional cardiac screening for secondary conditions stemming from the COVID-19 virus, such as myocarditis, among others.

- » **Following a mild, symptomatic infection, players will:** complete a minimum three-day progressive exercise protocol under team medical staff supervision with appropriate clinical monitoring.

- » **Following a moderate to severe infection, players will:** complete a progressive exercise protocol for a recommended seven days or equal to twice the duration of the hospitalization.

FOLLOWING A POSITIVE TEST, SYMPTOMATIC

A symptomatic player who tests positive can be cleared by his team physician to return to team activities after:

- » **1)** It has been ten days from the time symptoms first appeared
- » **AND 2)** it has been 24 hours since he last experienced symptoms.

PRIORITIZING PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health officials have confirmed the NFL-NFLPA testing and monitoring program will not impact test access for people who need them. The NFL communicates regularly with the CDC and laboratory and public health experts on this topic and has been given assurances that the program will not constrain testing resources or otherwise burden the public in any way.

SHARING FINDINGS

While the NFL will not release individual test results to protect the privacy of players and personnel, the league will regularly share aggregated, anonymized data regarding positive cases in an effort to help public health officials and the scientific community at-large gain insights from the testing program. Given that large-scale testing of a geographically diverse and asymptomatic population has not yet been conducted, the NFL expects that its testing program could provide broad insights about spread of the virus and how public health interventions help mitigate risk.

AN EVOLVING PROTOCOL

The 2020 season will require flexibility and adaptability, especially in evolving health and safety protocols to meet the medical science. The NFL and NFLPA expect the current testing protocols to change as medical and scientific knowledge of the virus continues to grow. The NFL and NFLPA are in regular communication with public health experts, the CDC, and medical officials from other professional sports leagues, among others. The current protocols reflect learnings so far and will continue to be adapted as necessary in partnership with the NFLPA.