



The Million Dollar Question on Athlete, Parents, and Coaches Mind When Can I Play Again?

Mike Napierala PT, SCS, CSCS, FAFS, NG360
PEAK PERFORMANCE, Physical Therapy/Sports Training

TOUGH DECISIONS

WHEN IS IT SAFE AND APPROPRIATE TO RETURN TO PLAY AFTER INJURY?

- Let's first agree that athletes, parents, and coaches **SOMETIMES** get really excited and expectant of seeing an athlete return to play.
 - **GOOD STUFF** right? Well...not always.
 - ◆ Is it possible your judgment might sometimes be clouded by that enthusiasm?
 - ◆ Is it possible that sometimes undue pressure is put on an athlete to return?
 - ◆ Do you have the skills and knowledge to adequately test their readiness?
 - ◆ Have you considered what risks are being taken by returning too soon?
- **College Athlete Example**
 - ACL Reconstruction many months ago, released by school surgeon to practice
 - ◆ Had "done PT" at school. Mostly double leg strengthening, some balance work, and then on to jogging, and then to agility drills.
 - ◆ On the surface "looked fine" running and doing light agility. Was already doing sport practicing without contact drills



161 East Commercial St
East Rochester, NY 14445
WWW.PEAKPTROCHESTER.COM
PHONE: 585-218-0240 FAX: 585-218-0245

- ◆ Gaps found on single leg functional 3D (3 directional/dimensional) testing
 - Twisting and side to side control on one leg limited and asymmetric
 - Abnormal and asymmetric foot structure causing poor control issues
 - Poor landing mechanics onto one leg
 - Functional single leg strength standing had 50% deficit + explosive power and deceleration ability of course were limited
 - YET HE'D ALREADY BEEN TURNED LOOSE TO PRACTICE!!!!
- Lack of Symptoms ≠ **NORMAL FUNCTION**

COMPETENCE CREATES CONFIDENCE!

Returning to play safely requires a critical eye and careful testing to minimize the risk of injury.

CALL PEAK PERFORMANCE TO SEE IF YOU'RE READY!

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