



Bristol Penguin Olympic Swimming Club - Protocol on Athletes Returning to Training Following Illness or Injury

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer/athlete to inform BPOSC if they have suffered a serious illness or injury, or have been given a new diagnosis of an illness that could affect their swimming.

Bristol Penguin Olympic Swimming Club will work with the athlete (and their parent/carer if under 18yrs) to ensure they are fit and well enough to train and compete. The club staff although highly experienced and qualified are not medical professionals and may need to seek advice when a member wishes to return to training following minor illness or injury. The coach will have the final decision on whether an athlete is fit enough to train or compete.

An athlete wishing to return to training/competition following serious illness or injury, must obtain advice from their own medical practitioner, who must have an understanding of the swimming discipline and type and amount of training undertaken.

Where a swimmer has received hospital treatment following serious illness or accident, the athlete (or parent/carer if under 18yrs), must complete and sign the club Return to Training Agreement before restarting training, with if necessary a club rehabilitation programme. This needs to be sent to the Assistant Welfare Officer at elliebourdeaux@gmail.com. **Without confirmation that the form has been received, the teacher/coach will not be allowed to let the swimmer participate in the session.** The teacher/coach will consider the detail and medical advice on the Return to Training Agreement and discuss a suitable rehabilitation programme with the athlete (and parent/carer if under 18yrs). The rehabilitation programme will take into account the type of injury, athlete's age, ability, level of training, personal ambitions, level of general fitness etc.

This applies to serious illness or injury which includes any hospital treatment, operations, broken bones, joint displacements, cuts/abrasions involving stitches, major strains and sprains, including treatment at an A&E department.

If necessary, and a return to training agreement is not reached, Swim England has its own protocol on dealing with medical issues. A copy can be obtained from the Club Welfare Officer. The Swim England protocol involves the athlete (or parent if under 18yrs), giving written contact details of their own medical practitioner to the Swim England Medical Advisor to enable an investigation to take place. The Swim England Medical Officer will then advise the athlete, parent and club of the outcome but will take no further action. If it is considered a safeguarding issue, it will be passed to the Swim England Legal Services, Safeguarding and Protecting Children Officer for further investigation and action.

After a minor illness/injury including coughs and colds, minor abrasions, an athlete may return to training and/or competition as soon as fully recovered. Athletes should not swim with chest, throat, vomiting or diarrhoea, ear infections or high temperature and should not return to training after vomiting or diarrhoea for at least two weeks.

Any medical issues and/or treatment, including asthma must be reported to the coach and club Membership Officer. This information will be kept on file and will be treated confidentially but may be shared with other coaches on a need to know basis.