



101-1246 Esquimalt Road,
Victoria, BC V9A 3N8
T:250-382-7489 F:250-382-7480
www.lowerislandsoccer.com

President: R. Tim Satterford

To: Club Presidents
From: Lower Island Soccer Association (LISA)

Re: Return to Play Decision Making

At Lower Island Soccer Association we are often dealing with athletes and their families that, after an injury, want to see a quick return to the field of play. Although common sense should prevail, LISA is increasingly dealing with conflicts between coaches, administrators, families and athletes on 'Return to Play' decision making.

Injury, requiring time away from the field, is and always will be a painful disruption in a young athlete's life. Their 'Return to Play' timeline is most often left in the coach's charge. Most often they are NOT a health care professional. Coaches must attempt to correctly establish the facts surrounding an athlete's ability to train and compete. They may decide that a doctor's note and/or parent permission be required. Using caution and considering the athlete's history will ensure decisions are individualized to each athlete. Respecting an athlete's ability to continue playing in the long-term will enhance integrity with the remainder of the team.

An athlete's return to play timeline must be based on the individual athlete's circumstances. It is best developed and implemented by those who best know the athlete and in conjunction with a health professional.

As a best practice to help guide coaches and others make 'ethical decisions' LISA encourages that The NCCP's Golden Rule and Do No Harm Principle be the foundation of 'Return to Play' decision making.

DO NO HARM PRINCIPLE

It is the duty of all coaches to ensure the decisions they make and the actions they take will result in no harm, physical or other, to the athlete.

For guidance on 'Ethical Decision Making' regarding post injury return to play, or any other often difficult decisions that must be made from time to time, please visit the National Coaching Certification Program Making Ethical Decisions:

http://www.coach.ca/files/MED_PPT_EN_2012.pdf