



2020-21 Gymnastics Considerations

In support of the Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities, the NFHS Gymnastic Rules Committee offers this document for state associations to consider whether any possible rules could be altered for the 2020-21 season. The considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging social distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel and allowing for appropriate protective equipment.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and there might be additional steps in each school, city, and state to help prevent the spread of virus. Even when taking all precautions, there will still be risk of transmitting illnesses. Everyone should stay vigilant about the health of members of their teams. Lastly, the situation with Covid-19 is rapidly changing. These considerations may quickly become outdated. Please keep up with the latest from the CDC and other health officials in your state.

General Considerations

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times. No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
- Contact equipment manufacturers for specifics on proper cleaning protocols for their equipment. Continued use of disinfectant chemicals may reduce the life of the product. The application of disinfectant chemicals may have unintended results and place the gymnast at risk of injury.
- Remove common chalk bowls. Chalk bowls frequently become talking places for athletes.
- Student athletes should consider wearing cloth facial covering while in the facility and when moving from each apparatus, but not while participating on the equipment as the mask could come off, move, or become a distraction and increase the risk of injury.
- Social distancing should be in practice while waiting for a turn on the apparatus or moving from one event to another. Communicate gym policies clearly to participants and parents.
- Everyone should wash and sanitize their hands before entering and leaving the gym and must wash/sanitize their hands between rotation to different events.
- Cloth face coverings may be worn when entering and leaving the gym but should be stored in the athlete's gym bag during practice. It is not recommended that face coverings be worn while the athlete is participating on the equipment.
- Cloth Face Coverings per the State of Indiana's order, face masks have been mandated for all not engaged in strenuous activity. Coaching staff members, workers, official table personnel, officials and spectators should wear a mask at all times.

Considerations for Coaches

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.

- Consider conducting workouts in “pods” of same students always training and rotating together on apparatus in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Athlete safety is paramount, and coaches should not be restricted from spotting an athlete if necessary, to protect the athlete from injury.
- Expectations regarding spotting or alternative teaching/coaching methods should be clearly communicated repeatedly during practice.
- Follow CDC guidelines regarding social distancing.
- Follow the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting the building.

Considerations for Students

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.

Considerations for Judges

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Don't share equipment.
- Follow social distancing guidelines.
- Space judges 3-6 feet apart at judging tables.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre and post meet ceremony guidelines established by state associations.
- Judges and meet personnel may wear cloth face coverings.

Considerations for Parents (A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others)

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
 - Gym bag, water bottle, grips, tapes, pre-wrap, wrist guards, personal chalk bag etc. (See gym bag document)
 - Individual chalk bags, plastic bins, buckets or other storage containers should be used and stored in the athlete's gym bag.

Gym Bag

- A reusable **cloth facial covering** – The mask, must be worn when entering the building and anytime you leave the gym. Once you have entered the workout area, you can put your mask into a baggie inside your gym bag. However, you must abide by the at least 6' apart rule at all times while in the workout area.
- **Grips, wristbands** and any **braces** that are normally used during practices will stay in your gym bag.
- Include a **travel size spray bottle** filled with water to spray your grips. Be sure to keep the spray bottle inside a **Ziploc bag** in case it leaks.

- **Personal bottle of hand sanitizer** = less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing around waiting to use a shared gym bottle – be sure to have this inside a **Ziploc bag**, in case it leaks. This will be used before each event and when exiting the building.
- **Disinfectant wipes** for personal use to disinfect your feet – can be alcohol wipes. These will be used when entering, after each event and before exiting.
- **1 ½” white athletic tape** and any other tape you normally use during practice.
- **Fingernail clippers** – flat edge instead of round because they are for cutting rips
- **Personal water bottles** for drinking– the water fountains will not be in use because of CDC guidelines. Bring two bottles if you think you will drink that much water.
- Your shoes will also be stored in your gym bag, in a separate compartment or bag that is inside your gym bag. Preventing possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
- A **Gallon size freezer Ziploc bag** or plastic container big enough to get your hands into. Each gymnast will be given chalk for their personal use. There will not be any shared chalk buckets available in the gym.

Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice – before you return to the gym again. Be sure the disinfectant doesn't contain bleach; it could ruin your bag. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well. This is for everyone's protection; we don't want to take a chance of carrying any potential virus back and forth.