

# THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH NETBALL DURING COVID-19

## COVID-19 PERSONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

*This resource can be used to share with club and team members to ensure they understand the risks netball poses during COVID-19 pandemic. It is important that members understand this and 'opt in' to activity in full knowledge of the risks.*

In every sport and leisure activity there are risks of COVID-19 transmission.

COVID-19 can be transmitted in 3 ways:

- Droplet transmission when in close contact with others.
- Fomite transmission by sharing of equipment like netballs and bibs.
- Airborne transmission which is a risk particularly when indoors.

When thinking about netball specifically:

- It is a game that can be fairly static in nature.
- You have 3 seconds to pass the ball, or 4 seconds if you're a Walking Netball or Bee Netball participant
- We defend face to face at a 3-foot (0.9m) distance.
- A netball is passed by hand continuously by multiple people.
- It is a game that is often played indoors.
- The netball family are a very friendly group and have traditions such as 3 cheers, handshakes, and high fives in close circles.

All these things combined mean there are regular breaches to social distancing during 'normal' netball activity that leads to significant periods of time during a training session or netball match that causes increased risk. These breaches are not currently permitted within other parts of day-to-day life and is therefore the reason why modifications must be introduced.

Netball carries a greater risk than other activities, and as part of the return to community netball we need to mitigate some of the risks to protect the netball family. As well as this, we need to ensure that netball is not responsible for an increased transmission of COVID-19 more broadly. This guidance document covers many of these mitigations.

To ensure that our sport can return, a number of modifications to the rules of netball have been made. These rules modifications have been created with two key principles in mind:

- To protect the netball family by reducing the incidences where face to face contact at less than 1m distance occurs, particularly when this is 'non-fleeting' contact (3 seconds or more).
- To maintain a game that is not too far away from the usual rules of netball.

The following page details the COVID-19 rule modifications. These modifications have been approved by Public Health England and the Government and represent the ONLY approved form of the game currently.

All involved in netball must familiarise themselves with these rule modifications and they must be utilised in all netball activity. These COVID-19 rule modifications will be temporary, however it is unknown how long they will be applied in England. Any updates will be shared with England Netball members and posted on the England Netball website.

## COVID-19 PERSONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

This information sheet aims to inform you, your family, and any other household contacts of any underlying medical conditions which could put you at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19. We recommend you consider the risk to both yourself and others of returning to any netball activity and discuss this with your netball club prior to participation.

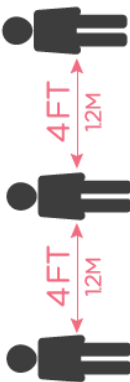
### People at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable):

- Are aged 70 or older.
- Have a lung condition that is not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema, or bronchitis).
- Have heart disease (such as heart failure).
- Have diabetes.
- Have chronic kidney disease.
- Have liver disease (such as hepatitis).
- Have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, or cerebral palsy).
- Have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections.
- Are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids).
- Are very obese (a BMI of 40 or above).

### People at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable):

- Have had an organ transplant.
- Are having chemotherapy or antibody treatment for cancer, including immunotherapy.
- Are having an intense course of radiotherapy (radical radiotherapy) for lung cancer.
- Are having targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system (such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors).
- Have blood or bone marrow cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma, or myeloma).
- Have had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or are still taking immunosuppressant medicine.
- Have been told by a doctor they have a severe lung condition (such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, or severe COPD).
- Have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID or sickle cell).
- Are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppressant medicine).
- Have a serious heart condition and are pregnant.

# MODIFIED NETBALL ACTIVITY RULE MODIFICATIONS



4FT SPACING FOR  
THE START OF PLAY



4FT MARKING



4FT POSITION OF  
PENALISED PLAYER



REMOVAL OF  
TOSS UPS



REMOVAL OF  
IDLE INTERACTIONS

### RULE MODIFICATIONS AND ACTIVITY SETUP

- 4ft spacing for the start of play.
- 4ft marking.
- 4ft position of penalised player.
- Removal of toss ups.
- Removal of idle interactions.

### TRAINING SESSIONS:

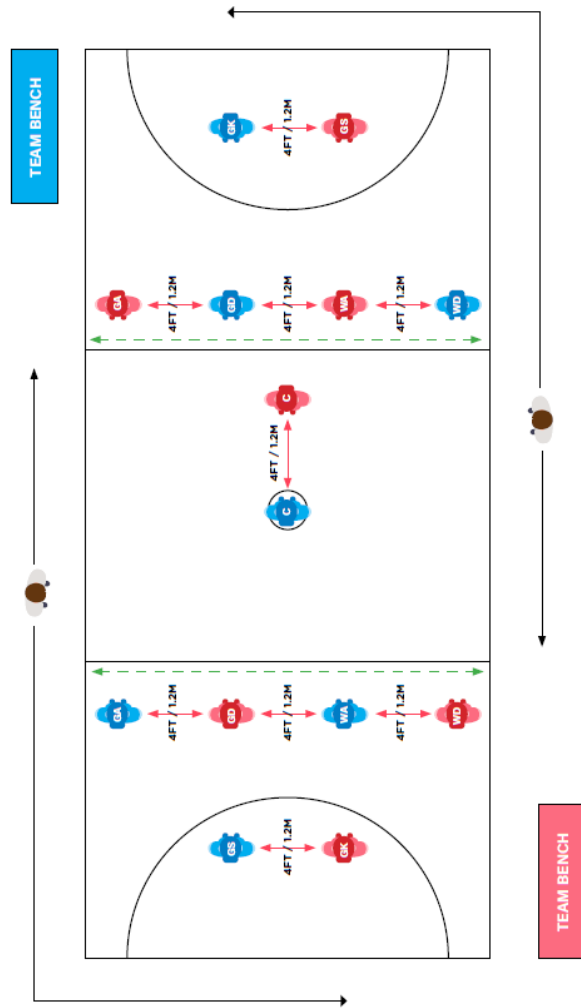
- Socially distanced arrivals and departures.
- Limited amount of time in close contact - 60 mins max.
- Further socially distanced practices permitted.
- Rule modifications used.
- Sanitisation breaks every 15 minutes (hands & equipment).

### UMPIRES

- 2 umpires must be used during matchplay.
- Must ensure players are adhering to the rule modifications.
- Maintain 4ft away from players at all times.
- Do not deliver the ball at centre pass.

### MATCH HYGIENE AND SAFETY MEASURES

- Players are required to sanitise their hands at the start and end of each quarter.
- A freshly cleaned/sanitised ball should be used for each quarter (game ball can be used but must be cleaned at quarter times).
- Spare 'clean' ball to be kept in reserve if the match ball enters a spectator area.
- Match Officials and Scorers will now be required to be at least 2m from activity where possible, with 2m distance between chairs.
- Those sitting on team benches will be 2m or 1m+ apart with risk mitigation in place where 2m is not possible.
- Team talks should be conducted in socially distant circles on the court to avoid congesting the bench area.
- Social norms: including handshaking, goal celebrations, high 5's etc are not permitted.
- The post protector at each goal end should be sanitised prior to the start of the match.
- Players are actively discouraged from touching the post.
- Shouting is not permitted.
- No sharing of water bottles and these should be clearly marked.
- A clean set of bibs should be used with no sharing.
- Matches for those aged 18 years and above, can only take place outdoors.



### POSITIONS FOR THE START OF PLAY

- All players must not position within 4ft (1.2m) of any other player.
- GA/GD/WA/WD can position as normal at any point along the transverse line but must maintain a distance of 4ft (1.2m) from each other.
- GS/GK are required to start inside the Goal Circle 4ft/1.2m apart.
- Centres can position as normal but must maintain a distance of 4ft (1.2m) either at the Centre Circle or if the Centre decides to mark at the transverse line.

### COMPLIANCE

- All who take part in this version of Netball have a responsibility for ensuring that they adhere to the modifications put in place. These modifications have been introduced to significantly reduce the number of face to face interactions that may occur but players should ensure that they actively seek to remove these from the game.
- Any persistent breaches of these modifications will result in players being dealt with under Game Management rules which could be accelerated to protect the safety of other players.