



A note from Dr. Steve Keeler, National Team Physician, Swimming Canada

Swimmers are leaders in the youth athlete world and can help by showing leadership by modeling appropriate behavior, especially encouraging social distancing. Consider using your social media influence to promote/advocate for responsible actions. Being a fit young athlete puts you in a demographic with an exceedingly low risk of significant illness with this virus. However, please be mindful that your decisions will have a huge impact on the health of older adults in your lives such as parents, grandparents, coaches, etc...

Now is the time to focus on improvements out of the pool. Sleep structure, strength and conditioning, school, mental health, rehab nagging injuries, etc... The most successful athletes that I've been involved over the years have the edge outside their field of play. Once this pandemic settles, be in a better personal space. Keep structure in your life through routines with good sleep, nutrition, exercise, school, etc...

I'd like to emphasize a couple key tips for surviving the quarantine:

1. Be careful not to spend too much time focusing on the media surrounding C19. Perhaps limit to 30 minutes per day. Yes, this is serious situation, but it is often sensationalized and alarmist in the media. I have stopped watching updates on the European situation and have focused only on the BC and Canadian situation.
2. Focus on the things you can control: your behavior and surroundings. Recognize what you can change, and what is beyond your control.
3. Remember that while this pandemic is scary and is complicating all of our lives, it is only temporary. Life will get back to feeling free, relaxed, busy and connected. Normal for you will return. For now patience and resiliency will be required for you as individuals, your communities and all of us as a country.
4. Consider volunteering as it makes you feel good. For example, I'm helping a local group of athletes set up a medication delivery network by bike to help overwhelmed pharmacies get meds to those quarantined.

Keep in mind that there is mounting false evidence on social media prevention and curative treatments for C19. These include "immune boosters" elixirs, lamps, oregano oils and other various supplements. These are unfounded, and to reinforce the messaging that excellent, 20 second frequent hand washing, social distancing and following the advice of your local public health officials is recommended. Supplements come with considerable risk for inadvertent doping violations.

Finally, once the pandemic settles and training facilities open, please be cautious to not proceed too quickly with training in an attempt to make up for lost time in the pool. This is a common cause of overuse injuries. Consider building back slowly.