



COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan Egypt 2021

Questions & Answers – 15.12.2020



Is the email communication with the Medical Commission Coordinator Dr Radwa Sarhan (email: Rhandball@yahoo.com) secure, taking into consideration that health information is exchanged?

Each National Federation shall communicate the results of the pre-competition medical assessment as well as the entire training plan, testing procedures, and test results to the following email address: medical.egypt2021@ihf-online.info. Any questions related to the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan should be sent to the same email address. The email communication is secure.

Is it necessary to carry out the pre-competition medical assessment once again before the World Championship in case all players have been examined at least once in the last 3-4 months?

Reference is made to chapter 3.2. of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan which states the following:

“All players should be systematically examined (pre-competition medical assessment, blood picture, electrocardiogram (ECG), echocardiogram, chest X-ray). If a team has such medical files being continuously updated, it is not necessary to repeat the medical assessment. If a team does not yet have such medical files, the mentioned medical assessment must be carried out prior to the training camp.”

Therefore, in case all players have been examined at least once in the last 3-4 months, it is not necessary to repeat the pre-competition medical assessment prior to the World Championship.



Why are chest X-rays required as part of the pre-competition medical assessment?

Chest X-rays are recommended as part of the pre-competition medical assessment, but not obligatory.

What kind of document shall be communicated by the teams as a confirmation of the pre-competition medical assessment, taking into consideration the strict personal data protection regulations in the European Union which do not allow sending exact results to a third party?

The IHF complies with the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Therefore, the results of the pre-competition medical assessment should only be forwarded to medical.egypt2021@ihf-online.info. Alternatively, National Federations shall submit an official confirmation stating that all players have undergone a pre-competition medical assessment and are in good health to compete at the World Championship.

What will apply in case a team is not able to conduct the pre-competition medical assessment for time or financial reasons?

Participating in a major IHF event involves a thorough preparation of the team by the National Federation concerned, also from a medical point of view. In order to facilitate the teams' preparation, all the costs related to the teams' participation are borne by the IHF/Organising Committee, and additionally the IHF is granting a qualification bonus to the National Federations. Therefore, the National Federations shall submit the results of the pre-competition medical assessment to medical.egypt2021@ihf-online.info. Alternatively, National Federations shall submit an official confirmation stating that all players have undergone a pre-competition medical assessment and are in good health to compete at the World Championship.



What will apply if a National Federation cannot guarantee that all members of their team go into quarantine for seven days before the start of the training? Is a written confirmation mandatory stating that the National Federation enters a team quarantine seven days prior to the start of the World Championship?

Chapter 3.2. of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan states the following:

“As an additional safety measure, if possible, at least seven days prior to the start of the training camp will be spent in quarantine, where regular testing and recording of body temperature will be continued.”

While a seven-day quarantine before the start of the training is highly recommended, an isolation from the date of the PCR test (within 72 hours before the arrival date) until arrival to Egypt is obligatory for all stakeholders travelling to Egypt as stated in chapter 5.1. of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan.

A PCR test is required of everyone involved in training operations five days prior to the start of the training. Is the period of five days appropriate?

In case the team does not spend a period of at least seven days prior to the start of the training camp in quarantine, a PCR test should be conducted within five days prior to the start of the training camp followed by another obligatory PCR test within 72 hours before arriving to Egypt.



Is one PCR test per week during the preparatory training camp enough?

For general training camps, PCR tests should be carried out at least once a week while for final training camps (taking place directly before the World Championship), PCR tests should be carried out at least every 72 hours.

May friendly matches only be played against teams which have recently tested negative (e.g. within 48 hours)?

Matches shall be played only against teams that have been recently tested negative in order to ensure that the risk of infection is minimised. Additionally, the teams concerned shall have stayed within a bubble without external contacts since the last negative PCR test.

Will the same hygiene measures apply for potential substitute nations in the preparation prior to the World Championship?

The COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan has been communicated to the substitute nations, asking them to comply with the hygiene measures in their preparation prior to the World Championship.



Is the testing period of 72 hours prior to arrival and during the World Championship sufficient?

The Egyptian government requires a negative PCR test carried out within 72 hours before the arrival date. Additionally, upon arrival, every stakeholder involved in the World Championship is required to undergo a rapid COVID-19 antigen test at the airport followed by another PCR test at the hotel upon arrival as stated in chapter 5.1. of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan. During the World Championship, the teams (all delegation members) will be tested every 48 hours.

Please provide more details about the bubble concept (e.g. routes, rooms, processes).

According to the revised accommodation concept, the stakeholders involved in the World Championship will not only be physically separated from any external contacts, but all hotels will exclusively accommodate IHF and OC stakeholders while external guests will not be allowed. Despite the fact that the stakeholders have no external contacts throughout their stay, all hygiene provisions of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan must be applied at all times. The Organising Committee is currently developing a detailed plan on how all facilities, rooms, restaurants etc. may be used by the stakeholders in order to reduce contacts, e.g. in the gym. The detailed plan will be provided in due course.

Please confirm that the same hygiene rules and testing concepts apply for all members of the bubble.

The COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan is applicable for all stakeholders within the bubble. Please refer to the list of stakeholders in Annex 1 of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan.



Will all hotel staff, security staff (police) and bus drivers be within the bubble throughout the event?

Yes, all hotel staff, security staff and drivers dealing with the stakeholders belonging to the bubble will stay within the same overall bubble throughout the event.

Although all stakeholders are within one overall bubble, will a physical separation by barriers between National Federation delegations and IHF guests, TV crews, volunteers, cleaning staff and hotel staff be considered?

No physical separation by barriers will be installed. As previously mentioned, the hotels will exclusively accommodate stakeholders involved in the World Championship, taking into consideration that controls are conducted by security staff at the entrance and exit of the hotels.

How is the access to the fitness facilities and outdoor areas of the hotel? Can a stakeholder in the bubble move within certain areas outside and to what extent? How are the opportunities for fitness for the whole team/individual players? Will both options be at the hotel or elsewhere, and is the usage limited to specific time slots e.g. through a booking system, so that only one team is there at a time?

The hotels selected by the Organising Committee (5-star hotels) are exclusively reserved for stakeholders involved in the World Championship. Consequently, all areas of the hotel, including fitness facilities, swimming pools etc., are only accessible for stakeholders belonging to the bubble. Leaving the bubble for any activity not related to the World Championship is in general not allowed.



Please provide more information about the isolation rooms at the hotel. Infected members of the bubble and direct contact persons might have to stay there for up to 14 days. Do the hotels have sufficient capacities for this?

Single rooms will serve as temporary isolation rooms at the hotel for the following:

- Suspected cases until the PCR test result is known
- Confirmed cases until the result of the audit laboratory is known.

Direct contact persons of confirmed cases will be isolated in their own hotel room until the PCR test result is known.

In case of a positive test result which has been confirmed by the audit laboratory, the infected stakeholder will be transferred to the hospital immediately.

Is it planned to isolate stakeholders also for longer periods of time in the referral isolation sector? Please provide more information about possibilities to return home.

It normally takes up to 14 days to recover from COVID-19. Otherwise, the infected stakeholder will need to stay in the referral isolation sector until two negative PCR tests within 72 hours have been issued. Afterwards the stakeholder concerned may return home.



For returning from the referral isolation sector two negative PCR test within 72 hours must be provided. What will apply in case a stakeholder continues to test positive even after full recovery? Will the stakeholder concerned be able to return to the bubble or home?

A stakeholder may only return to the bubble or home after two negative PCR tests within 72 hours have been issued. In case a stakeholder continues to test positive even after full recovery, additional tests will be carried out in terms of serology, CBC, CRP and radiology (chest X-ray and CT).

How many negative PCR tests are required for a direct contact person of a confirmed case to be allowed to return to the bubble? Which testing rhythm will apply for stakeholders after having been in direct contact with a confirmed case?

After having been in direct contact with a confirmed case, the stakeholders concerned shall be tested once and be isolated until the test result is known. Afterwards, the PCR test shall be repeated as usual within every 72 hours (every 48 hours in case of team delegation members).

Will the insurance of IHF/OC cover costs arising in connection with any long-term health issues, home transportation and possible impacts on the clubs (players not being able to play for their clubs in case of sickness and/or quarantine)?



In general, pandemics/COVID-19 are not excluded under the IHF Player Support Programme in respect of the benefits:

- temporary total disablement and/or
- permanent total disablement

For the avoidance of doubt, please note that a COVID-19 infection would have to be diagnosed for the first time during the operative time* of the IHF Player Support Programme. An actual diagnosis of a COVID-19 disease must be established during the operative time*.

Pure Quarantine [e.g. player is not sick, just in quarantine for safety or legal reasons, etc. as a precaution] is not covered or does not trigger the IHF Player Support Programme.

**Operative Time means the period whilst the handball player(s) is/are under the control of the National Federation for all matches of the IHF Men's and Women's Handball World Championship 2021 including playing, practicing, training as well as training or friendly matches, time spent away and official duties including all direct travel to and from.*

Cover shall apply 24 hours per day whilst the handball player(s) is/are under control of the respective National Federation. Cover applies from the time the handball player(s) leave(s) his/their hometown or club address until the handball player(s) return(s) to his/their home or club address or 48 hours after leaving the official party including direct unbroken travel.

The programme will not provide any cover for death following sickness/COVID-19 infection or for any costs of medical treatment.



What will apply if a player, in case of an injury, needs hospital care? Will he (and one of the team's medical staff members present during the check-up) be able to return to the bubble afterwards?

As soon as an injured stakeholder is taken to hospital, he/she is outside the bubble. In order to return to the bubble afterwards, the same procedure of entering the bubble prior to the World Championship must be followed.

Will it be possible for each team to have their own meeting room at the team hotel?

Unfortunately not. The IHF is trying to allocate as many meeting rooms as possible, but each meeting room might have to be shared by more than two teams.

As the stakeholders will spend most of their time at the hotel, will a good internet connection be ensured?

The IHF together with the Organising Committee will secure a high-speed internet connection in all hotels and arenas. Any complaints may be lodged to the IHF office on site (by phone); contact details will be included in the info brochure of the World Championship.

Will it be possible to provide single rooms for each player and official to minimise the risk of infection?

As previously mentioned, the accommodation concept has been revised. Exclusive hotels for the stakeholders are now available. As the stakeholders have no external contacts, the risk of infection will be minimised.



As buffets are a major source for spreading infection both in terms of COVID-19 and bacteria in general, will each team have its own self-service buffet? Will it be mandatory to use disposable gloves and hand disinfectants at the buffet/dining area?

Hygiene standards must be applied at the buffet/dining area. The IHF and Organising Committee are currently discussing with the hotels and the Egypt 2021 Medical Commission on how the buffets will be provided in order to minimise the risk of infection. An update will be provided in due course.

Which guidelines shall apply in the dining room during meals (e.g. groups of max. 4 persons per table, fixed seating)?

Each team will have its own area in the dining room. A seating plan during meals will be organised in order to reduce contacts.

Will bottled water be made available for training?

Water bottles will be made available for training.

As players will have to take their showers at the hotel after the match, is it possible to use ice baths in the changing room for recovery? If yes, what is the process (place, cost, etc.)?

No, ice baths are not allowed.



Will each team have its dedicated changing room for the whole Preliminary Round (and the Main Round if qualified)?

No, but a schedule of using the changing room will be set up. Additionally, each changing room will be disinfected regularly.

Are snacks (fruits, cereal bars) allowed in the changing room during the match (especially during half-time)?

Eating in the changing room is not allowed. However, packed snacks for the teams are available in the bus as mentioned in chapter 9.1. of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan.

Is the time frame allowed to be spent in the changing room (30-40 minutes) appropriate or could it be further reduced?

As the bubble concept will be applicable both in the hotel and the arena, the time frame allowed to be spent in the changing room may be as normal as possible. However, if teams decide to reduce the time frame spent in the changing room, transportation etc. will be arranged accordingly.

If media representatives are within the bubble zone, will they also stay at the team hotel? If yes, are they then kept away from the teams?

Media representatives are staying within the same overall bubble. The IHF will try to accommodate them on a separate floor away from the teams and instruct them not to disturb the teams.



How many spectators will be allowed to attend the matches in the arena, taking into consideration the large risk of infection resulting from spectators and limited ventilation in the arena?

The number of spectators allowed to attend the matches in the arenas corresponds to 30% of the venue capacity as decided by the Egyptian Minister of Health and Population. The Ministry of Health and Population shall evaluate the ventilation in the arena and issue its final decision, considering the development of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Which safety concept for spectators will apply, taking into consideration that the risk of transmission from spectators to stakeholders must be minimised? How will the spectators or other untested persons be separated from the stakeholders within the bubble? Which minimum distance must be maintained between them in the arena?

The spectators are not within the bubble. A safety zone will be installed between the bubble zone and the spectator area, i.e. the stakeholders within the bubble will have no direct contact with the spectators. The volunteers in the spectator area are not within the bubble and not allowed to enter the bubble zone. All spectators and persons working in the spectator area are obliged to wear face masks at all times.



Is it obligatory for stakeholders to stay in Egypt in case of infection at the end of the World Championship? Will the availability to transport stakeholders back home be ensured? Please provide information about the possibilities for return travel despite infection or ordered quarantine.

Any stakeholder who might be infected shall remain in quarantine until two negative PCR test results within 72 hours have been issued. The National Federations, in coordination with the airlines, should book the return flight accordingly. The IHF will also be available for any assistance the National Federations need.

Please confirm that any violation of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan will be severely punished, taking into consideration that violations might jeopardise all stakeholders and the championship as a whole.

The IHF Council formed a Disciplinary Commission which may impose different sanctions in case of non-compliance with the obligations set out in the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan. A violation of the key elements of the COVID-19 Medical Precaution Plan will be severely punished, e.g. by excluding the stakeholder concerned from the competition. In cases of violations not affecting the health and safety of the stakeholders, warnings and fines may be imposed.