

St Neots Netball Club

Returning from Long-Term Injury and/or After Having a Baby

As a club, it is paramount that we support our members to return safely to training and playing netball after a long-term injury and/or after having a baby.

Therefore, we have some guiding principles that we apply to these scenarios whilst also understanding there is a need to treat some people and situations on a case-by-case basis.

Our Approach to Long-Term Injury

- A player who is injured and unable to play netball for up to 3 months, as a result of their injury, will be required to return to training for a minimum of 2 weeks before playing competitively. This is so their recovery can be assessed in a safe space.
- In the scenario where a player is injured and does not play for a period longer than 3 months, as a result of their injury, the best approach to take will be discussed. The approach may include training for longer than 2 weeks before returning to competitive play, and/or playing competitively in a different club team whilst rebuilding confidence, strength, and fitness. Competitive play may also be restricted and built up over an appropriate number of weeks to ensure the player is confident and healthy.
- In all cases, the approach to a player's long-term injury will be discussed and agreed between the player, their captain and club coaches.

Our Approach to Returning After Having a Baby

- We will actively support any returning mums safely and gradually (taking into consideration an individual's situation e.g. how long they haven't played, fitness levels etc.)
- As a 'rule of thumb', we request that returning mums attend a minimum of 4 training sessions before playing competitively.
- After they have been at training for at least 4 sessions, there will be a discussion between the player (returning mum) and the club coaches about their options to restart competitive play. It will be discussed which club team is the best fit for them to return to, the amount of game play that is realistic and sensible for the player, etc.
- As a club we cannot guarantee that a player will return to the same team they were part of prior to having a baby. However, if returning to their previous team is the ambition of the player, we are committed to explore options and support where feasible/possible.

Below is a link to some useful research and information that England Netball have published as part of their Netball Her initiative about returning to exercise after having a baby:

<https://netballher.co.uk/pre-and-post-natal/new-mums-and-the-return-to-exercise/>