



## ITF RETURN TO INTERNATIONAL TENNIS PROTOCOLS FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

Date of last update: 3 August 2020.

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**Q: What is the process for determining the eligibility of a tournament to be added to the ITF tournament calendar?**

- 1** A: The ITF has created a *Tournament Eligibility and Review Protocol*, which can be found on the ITF website at: [www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/organisation/publications-and-resources/tournament-organisers/](http://www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/organisation/publications-and-resources/tournament-organisers/).
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**Q: Are indoor tournaments permitted by the ITF?**

- 2** A: Yes, providing that the necessary precautions are taken. Each tournament must complete a risk assessment, which describes these precautions. The ITF will review this and work with the tournament organiser to ensure that the appropriate precautions will be implemented.
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**Q: What would happen if a player arrived on-site with an elevated temperature (fever) that is not due to Covid-19?**

A: In the majority of cases, a player who presents with a non-Covid-19-caused elevated temperature should not be playing tennis, irrespective of the cause.

There is one exception, which is where the elevated temperature is the result of exercise. The ITF screening protocols account for this possibility, by permitting repeated measures.

This is a question of fairness. Would it be unfair on that person if they were denied access to a tournament? The starting point is to identify the non-Covid-19 reasons why someone could have an elevated temperature. The Mayo Clinic (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fever/symptoms-causes/syc-20352759>) says:

- 3** “Fever or elevated body temperature might be caused by:
  - A virus
  - A bacterial infection
  - Heat exhaustion
  - Certain inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis — inflammation of the lining of your joints (synovium)
  - A malignant tumour
  - Some medications, such as antibiotics and drugs used to treat high blood pressure or seizures
  - Some immunizations, such as the diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis (DTaP) or pneumococcal vaccine

Sometimes the cause of a fever can't be identified.”

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However, there may be some causes of elevated temperature that would not necessarily prevent someone from competing (e.g., immunisations).

So, for those latter few people, a Covid-19 (PCR) test could theoretically be helpful. However, the ability of a Covid-19 test to determine whether someone is Covid-19 negative is only moderate, so a second test is needed to be sufficiently confident that the player doesn't have Covid-19 to be allowed to (continue to) participate. Two tests (with 24 hours between them, which is the accepted delay) could not be completed sufficiently soon to allow a player to compete, unless they were on-site around 5 days before the event started.

So, Covid-19 testing provides no benefit in this scenario. The need to protect the wider population against communicable diseases prevails over individual circumstances.

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**Q: I am at a tournament and notice symptoms of Covid-19. What should I do?**

A: If you are on-site at the time you notice symptoms, then you must contact the tournament Covid-19 Officer immediately. If you are on-site, arrangements will be made to return you to your accommodation. You may be seen by the Tournament/Independent Doctor before you leave the site.

4 If you are already at your accommodation, then you should stay there and you should not travel to the site. You should contact the tournament Covid-19 Officer immediately, who will inform the Tournament/Independent Doctor.

If you are sharing accommodation, then you should relocate to a single room with en-suite facilities, if possible, until it is known whether you have Covid-19. If that is not possible, then your room-mate(s) will be required to quarantine with you.

The Tournament/Independent Doctor will provide you with advice. This may include asking you (and your room-mate) to take a Covid-19 PCR (or equivalent) test, or you may be quarantined for 14 days, subject to local requirements. If you take a Covid-19 test, the outcome of that test will determine what you must do next. This process is described in detail in the ITF Covid-19 case management protocol.

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**5 Q: If I have a negative Covid-19 PCR (or equivalent) or antibody test, am I still subject to temperature screening and self-declaration of symptoms?**

A: Yes.

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**6 Q: If a participant fails any part of the entry screening, is that person removed from the tournament?**

A: Yes. This includes players who have a match that day. For all participants who fail entry screening, the ITF Covid-19 case management protocol will be followed.

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**7 Q: What happens if a participant refuses a temperature screen, or to answer the self-declaration questions?**

A: That person will not be permitted entry to the site.

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**8 Q: If a participant does not come on-site on a particular day for a non-Covid-19-related reason and so is not subject to temperature screening, will they be denied access on subsequent days?**

A: No. Temperature screens are only used for the purpose of permitting entry to the site on the day in question. They are not mandatory on days when participants do not wish or need to enter the site.

*Note: the ITF is exploring making daily self-declarations mandatory for all participants, irrespective of whether they come on-site.*

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**9 Q: How do the ITF protocols deal with asymptomatic carriers of Covid-19?**

A: The precise proportion of asymptomatic carriers isn't known, but the best estimates are around 15-20%. That is, they make up a relatively small proportion of the total number of cases. It also appears that asymptomatic individuals shed a relatively small amount of virus. Nonetheless, they do pose a risk of transmission. The primary objective of the ITF *Return to International Tennis Protocols* is to prevent transmission, which can be best achieved by compliance with physical distancing and hygiene requirements by all participants, even if they and any other person with whom they come into contact appears to be well.

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**10 Q: Will the ITF operate a 'track and trace' system?**

A: Yes. A system is being developed by which all records of Covid-19 symptoms and screening are stored and used to (a) prevent infected participants from entering tournaments and (b) notify those who may have been exposed to Covid-19. This will be deployed as soon as possible.

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**11 Q: Does the Covid-19 Officer need to have a medical background?**

A: No. If the Covid-19 Officer does not have a medical background, the Tournament Doctor must be involved in all medical decisions.

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**12 Q: Can two people (e.g. the Tournament Doctor and the Tournament Director) share the Covid-19 Officer role?**

A: Yes. Those people should maintain regular and frequent communication with each other to ensure that all elements of the role are being properly undertaken.

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**Q: Does the ITF have protocols for matches?**

- 13** A: Yes. These are published on the ITF website at [www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/organisation/publications-and-resources/tournament-organisers/](http://www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/organisation/publications-and-resources/tournament-organisers/).
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**Q: Are spectators permitted at ITF tournaments?**

- 13** A: Yes, providing that the maximum number of spectators does not exceed the number that can be safely managed within the venue or any limits imposed by local authorities, and the necessary precautions are taken. Spectator safety protocols are being developed and will be published in due course.
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**Q: Will there be sanctions for people who don't comply with the ITF *Return to International Tennis Protocols*?**

- 14** A: Yes. All participants have a responsibility to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 at ITF tournaments. The regulations of the ITF tours will be amended to address any failures to implement or comply with the ITF *Return to International Tennis Protocols*.
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**Q: Does the ITF have a dedicated helpline for Covid-19 issues?**

- 15** A: Yes – [covid19@itftennis.com](mailto:covid19@itftennis.com).
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