

# EXERTION PHYSICAL THERAPY

Exertion Therapy treatment begins when the patient is relatively symptom-free at rest and has been deemed appropriate to begin progressing aerobic activity. Activity is specific to the individual's fitness level and targets goals of returning to higher-level sport participation. There are FIVE stages of Exertion Therapy with increasing cardiovascular demands while incorporating head and body movements at varying intensities. Which stage the individual starts, depends on their tolerance and progression through the initial evaluation (see additional handout).

## **Stages of Exertion Therapy**

### Stage 1:

Light Aerobic Conditioning, Basic Core Exercises, and Balance Activities. Vestibular Treatment can be ongoing. Minimal head movements and cognitive demands incorporated. NO impact activities.

### Stage 2:

Moderate Aerobic Conditioning, Core Exercises, and Balance Activities. Progressive resistance utilized. Head movements, positional changes, and low intensity sport-specific activities incorporated.

Increasing cognitive demands on individual as appropriate with verbal or physical responses to external stimulus.

### Stage 3:

Progressed Aerobic Conditioning, Dynamic Movements, and Impact Activities. Progressive resistance, endurance, and sport-specific activities utilized. Challenge cognitive and quick decision-making skills.

### Stage 4:

Maximum Exertion by individual with sport-specific activities as appropriate for fitness level without contact. Return to NON-CONTACT practices.

### Stage 5:

Full Practice participation with sport-specific CONTACT. Performance of Exit Test for discharge from Exertion Therapy. Return to game participation once cleared by MD or PhD.