

Covid-19 Guidance: For swim, bike and run participants

22 July 2021





Triathlon and multisport is a great way to get active, have fun, and challenge yourself. The invigorating mix of swim, bike and run means you will never get bored and the triathlon family are very welcoming, as organisers strive to offer great experiences.

The aim of this guidance is to provide you with key information about participating in swim, bike, run activity in the current Covid-19 environment. British Triathlon want to ensure that you know how to participate safely and outline what provisions you should expect from the event organisers who are delivering any events that you participate in.

From Monday 19 July, England moved to Step 4 of the government's 'Roadmap', the point at which the majority of legal restrictions are removed. Whilst this is the case, the staging of events requires the support of everyone taking part.

British Triathlon and the Home Nations have been requested, and we firmly believe that it remains our responsibility as governing body of the sport, to continue to issue clear guidance to enhance safety and share best practice to provide great experiences in swim, bike, run.

Please be aware that any planned events may be postponed or cancelled at any time and you should always check with your event organiser to keep up to date.

Pre-event



Should you participate?

The first thing you should think about is your own health and wellbeing. It is your responsibility that you are sufficiently fit and healthy to participate in swim, bike, run events. You should think about any pre-existing medical conditions that you may have and if you are in any doubt, we recommend that you consult your GP or medical practitioner.

It is as yet unclear what impact Covid-19 will have on the long-term health of those who contract the virus. As a precaution, you should consider the following:

- ! If you were hospitalised due to Covid-19, you should undergo a form of health screening prior to taking part in triathlon activity. This screening is best led by a doctor with specialist training in sports medicine. However, other doctors may feel competent to make decisions on your fitness to compete and to decide any appropriate investigations that might be required
- ! If you were not hospitalised due to Covid-19, but self-isolated after having shown symptoms at any time, you are also recommended to undergo a form of screening
- ! If you have felt entirely well during the pandemic, you are not routinely recommended to undergo health screening, but it is something to be considered as part of your normal health monitoring for the health-conscious competitor
- ! People who are shielding should follow current guidance and make an informed decision about whether to attend an event
- ! People who are symptomatic should self-isolate with their household members for ten days according to NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend any event

Your GP should be able to guide you on what level of screening you may require and who is the best person to assist you in the process. Again, if you are in any doubt about your health, you should not participate in triathlon activity.

If you had entered your event prior to lockdown, and particularly for deferred entries from 2020, you should also be asked by the event organiser to re-declare your suitability/fitness to take part.

What event should you do?

We recommend that you participate in a British Triathlon permitted event.

You can find a list of permitted triathlon events [here](#). A permitted event is one that has been reviewed by the British Triathlon team, so you can be sure that the event planning and preparation has met the British Triathlon standard and will be run according to the competition rules.

Event organisers are required to continue providing a Covid-19 risk assessment, detailing what measures will be put in place.

Your event experience will still look a little different to normal with event organisers being required to continue with some elements, including recording of all attendees on site to support Test & Trace services – this could be through a pre-event health declaration, a scannable QR code for the NHS Covid-19 app or through contact details of all participants.

Event organisers are also being asked to continue implementing measures that can help promote confidence amongst competitors, the event team and volunteers, as well as anything which is required as part of requirements from local authorities and public health teams. More information about these measures can be found below.

What Equipment Do You Need?

You should use your own clearly marked equipment and only take the minimum amount of equipment that you need to participate safely.

It may be a while since you last participated or this could be your first time. Think about getting your equipment and clothing ready the night before your event and laying it out so you can check that you have everything you need.

Remember the usual equipment of:

- ✓ Wetsuit if swimming in open water (remember, for all open water swimming below 22°C the wearing of a full body wetsuit is recommended)
- ✓ Swimming costume
- ✓ Goggles
- ✓ Towel
- ✓ Trisuit (or cycle shorts and t-shirt)
- ✓ Bike helmet
- ✓ Cycling gloves
- ✓ Cycle shoes
- ✓ Socks
- ✓ Running trainers
- ✓ Water and nutrition

Additional items due to the Covid-19 environment:

- ✓ Hand sanitiser
- ✓ A face covering to wear is recommended when you're not competing, unless you are exempt from wearing one
- ✓ Additional water / drinks as there may be fewer or no aid stations on the course
- ✓ Warm clothes to change into
- ✓ Anti-viral wipes
- ✓ Soft-sided bag for your items at the event – you will be allowed to have this in your space in transition

Do not forget to cover cuts and abrasions, however minor, with sticking plasters. Do not swim if you have deep cuts or open wounds as the infection risk is higher, including the risk of contracting Weil's disease.



When on the event site, you should ensure that you remember the following throughout your event day experience:

- ! Whilst social distancing regulations have been removed, please be considerate and respectful to other participants and volunteers
- ! Maintain good hygiene. Use hand sanitiser throughout your event experience and try to minimise interaction with touch points

Furthermore, event organisers are being asked to consider continuing to adapt their events.

This could include:

- Prescribed arrival, registration check-in and transition racking times
- One way flows around the event site
- Time-trial starts may still be used, alongside or instead of mass starts. This could be individual starts or small group starts
- Face coverings may still be needed for indoor environments where crowding could be encountered
- Management of areas where crowding could occur and/or high-frequency touch points e.g. bag drop areas, changing tents, aid stations, relay exchange zones, timing chip removal, finish recovery areas

If swimming in open water, when you enter the water think about the following to acclimatise:

- ! Immerse yourself slowly
- ! Put your face in the water
- ! Take some deep breaths
- ! Gently tread water, slowly moving your legs and arms
- ! If you become nervous or uncomfortable, it is recommended that you roll onto your back and float, breathing deeply until you regain control. Your wetsuit and your tow float will help keep you buoyant
- ! Avoid touching your face

During the event, you should consider the aerosol effect whilst participating. Aerobic activity such as running and cycling will cause a person to expel air and therefore droplets behind them.

The majority of events will be non-drafting/draft-illegal, meaning that on the bike course, you should stay a minimum of 10 metres behind the bike in front and only be closer if you are overtaking. Where draft-legal racing is permitted, additional precautions such as evidence of a negative lateral flow test may be required.

When you are on the run course, try not to closely follow another participant and either try to run alongside, overtake or drop back slightly to maintain a gap. Remember to bring additional bottles of water for the bike and to carry on the run with you as there may still be fewer aid stations due to the minimising of high touch point areas.

Do not share water bottles or other refreshment containers. Where possible, you should take your own drink in a labelled or highly distinguishable container.

Post-event



Recovery – reheat plan and nutrition

Once you have finished your event, clean your hands with at least 60% alcohol gel and then you need to dry off and dress immediately. It is advisable to put on warm clothes, including a hat and gloves. This is to reduce the risk of you suffering from the “after drop”, which is the lowering of your core temperature.

In warm weather, if you are feeling hot, you may need to sit in the shallows (if possible) before leaving to help reduce your body temperature.

If possible, it is advised to get into a sheltered spot so you are protected from any wind or chill, which could be your car. To limit contact with other participants and surfaces, it is recommended that you minimise the amount of time spent on site after you have completed your event.

You may also be low on energy, so refuel with something sugary too. Before you eat or drink, wash your hands using sterilizing wipes or gels.

Cleaning Yourself and Equipment

When you return home, shower in fresh water at the earliest opportunity and again put on lots of warm clothes. This will remove all microbes, many of which are able to survive on the skin’s surface for long periods.

Rinse and wash all your kit in fresh water before drying thoroughly, including wetsuit, goggles, water bottle and swimming costume.

If you feel ill, seek medical advice by calling 111. This includes rashes for up to three weeks following your swim. Highlight that you have been swimming in open water and tell the operator the location that you swam in.

Leave it as you found it

Many of the places that you may participate in triathlon activity at are beautiful locations and we want to keep them that way. Ensure you take all your belongings and leave the location as you found it. Take any litter with you and dispose when you are back at home.

Now that you have finished your event, don’t forget to plan the next step in your swim, bike, run journey and remember that you can find all of the British Triathlon permitted events [here](#).