A close-up of a logo

Description automatically generated

Program is to be performed in conjunction with Return to Football program for returning to play. Athlete is able to initiate Phase I at same time as Return to Football Phase I.

Key notes:

* Perform program on every other day basis to allow for 24-48 hours of recovery time.
* Perform each level for 2-3 sessions before moving to next level- move to next level once able to complete with proper mechanics, good arm strength, and without symptoms.
* Athletes will progress at different rates through the program dependent upon confidence, degree of inflammation, severity of injury, age, and type of surgical intervention. Pain and swelling are the best guides to determining tolerance at each phase and whether an athlete should progress to the next step. Progression through the phases is combined evaluation and guidance of rehab provider and coach.
* Setbacks are common during return to sport progressions and sound judgment should be used regarding an extra rest day(s) or regressing back to prior phase if pain and swelling are problematic.
* Footwork drills are encouraged as patient progresses through program.
* Continue with strengthening exercises 2-3 times a week while progressing throwing program- strengthening exercises may overlap days of program and be performed after throwing program; however, must have one complete rest day per week.
* Active warm-up to initiate each session with cooldown following. Ice for 10-15 minutes following session as pain and swelling dictate.

Active warm-up

Pre-running drills (15 yards down and back each): jogging, skipping, side shuffle, backpedal, high knees, butt kicks, grapevine

Dynamic stretching routine to upper extremity, trunk and lower extremity (10 yards down and back each): single leg RDL, quad stretch, side lunge, forward lunge, reverse lunge, knee tucks, glute stretch, inchworms

Footwork drills: speed ladder or hurdles

Cool down

5-10 minutes global upper extremity, core, and lower extremity stretching

Ice for 10-15 minutes as pain and swelling dictates

Phase I: Contact Introduction (Double Arm Punch)

* Level 1:
  + Med ball chest pass 2 x 15, vertical chops 2 x 15, diagonal chops 2 x 15
    - Progressive increase in weight with each session as able
  + 3 x 15 double hand punch out of athletic stance against heavy bag held by trainer or couch
    - Initiate at 50% intensity and progressively increase to 75% as able
* Level 2:
  + Repeat level 1 exercises at 75% intensity
  + Sled push 15-20 yards for 6-8 repetitions at 50% intensity with gradual increase in load

Phase II: Progressive Intensity (Double Arm Punch)

* Level 1:
  + 3 x 6-8 double punch and drive 5 yards against a 1-man sled at 60-75% intensity
  + Sled push 20-25 yards 8-10 repetitions at 60-75% intensity with gradual increase in load
  + Plyometric/clap push-ups 3 x 15

Phase III: Single Arm Punch, Swim Move, and Tackling

* Level 1:
  + 2 x 6-8 double punch and drive 5 yards against 1 man sled 75% intensity progressing to 100% intensity
  + 3 x 10 single arm punch against bag, sled, or coach approaching with shield
  + Defensive players: begin swim moves around bag or coach holding a shield, tackling drills at full intensity against bag (held by coach) or sled
  + Offensive players: blocking or pass protection at full intensity against bag (held by coach) or sled

Phase IV: Practice/Play Progression

* Shoulder pads and helmet
* Participation in team drills with controlled contact (contact with unmoving object or contact with expected force)

Phase V: Full Contact Play

* Full pads and full contact in practice with progressive increase in playing time in preparation for full game play