

COVID-19 Protocols for
Spring and Summer 2021

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Many programs are optimistically gearing up for the coming spring and summer and we are getting lots of questions about current COVID-19 protocols. We have published and updated protocols constantly over the past year and they have evolved as the science and recommendations have changed. Our formal protocol documents are very detailed and can be a bit overwhelming. It's very easy to get distracted with details that may not be critically important. Here is a condensed rundown on what we feel are the most important things to consider when planning programs in 2021.

GEAR- Fomite transmission (touch) is not a big concern. Gear does not need to be sanitized or quarantined between users with the exception of helmets which should be sanitized with baby wipes or something similar (NO Clorox) as we have always done. However, you should have participants wash or sanitize hands before and after each activity.

MASKS and DISTANCING- You should use masks and social distancing during programs. However brief close contact, particularly outdoors, is not a concern. So you can do belay transfers like launching a participant off of a zipline as you have done in the past. The rule here is to avoid close contact, even when masked, that lasts more than 15 minutes.

This does mean that it will likely be difficult to do Low Course activities which require close proximity or spotting. There are modifications that might make some activities possible, like offering support to someone on a balance activity using a rope that spaces two "supporters" six feet away from the participant (on opposite sides). Low activities could be done normally if the group is in a cohort using close contact protocols, however the instructor may need to supervise from a distance. You can also consider non-contact games and activities. See a list in the download section of our website.

Can you still belay participants on climbing elements? Absolutely. Belays are traditionally done from a distance anyway. You may need to adapt the way you put on and check harnesses and helmets. You may also need to use a tight belay to make up for the lack of spotting.

Other protocols like health screening are also recommended, so please read our complete protocols if you want a comprehensive rundown. If you do need to wash gear, make certain to follow the recommendations in the link on the Operation Protocols document. Downloadable files are located here: <https://vestalsgapventures.com/wp55/files/>

These include-
Core Strategies for COVID-19
Client Operation Protocols
No Contact Activities List

