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Interval Swimming Program

This program is meant to serve as a guide as you return to swimming following a shoulder injury or surgery. Prior to returning to swimming you must have full range of motion and full strength in the he rotator cuff and scapular muscles. Your range of motion must be pain-free while performing the swimming stroke(s). It is usually best to start with the breaststroke and then progress to the crawl stroke second, followed by the backstroke and finally the butterfly. You should first establish a slow steady cadence concentrating on proper technique and building to a reasonable distance (1000 yards). After this, you begin to increase your swimming speed as long as you are pain-free. At the same time, a second stroke can be added. Additional stroke may then be added depending upon the need of your program. As swimming distance increases the risk of overuse injury becomes greater. A three time per week swimming frequency is recommended, taking every-other-day off to rest and recover. Do not progress to the next step if you experience pain while swimming. Do not progress to the next step if you experience pain that lingers into the next training day. Make sure that you warm-up prior to exercise and ice the shoulder down for 20-30 minutes after each days exercises. Swimmers with “lax or loose” joints should warm-up but not stretch. Finish the steps in each phase prior to entering the next phase.

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
	100 to 300 yards	300 to 600 yards	600 to 1000 yards
Step 1	Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards	Swim 300 yards	Swim 600 yards
Step 2	Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 10 minutes Swim 100 yards	Swim 300 yards Rest 10 minutes Swim 100 yards	Swim 600 yards Rest 10 minutes Swim 100 yards
Step 3	Swim 150 yards Rest 10 minutes Swim 150 yards	Swim 300 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards	Swim 600 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards
Step 4	Swim 300 yards	Swim 300 yards	Swim 600 yards

		Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards	Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards
Step 5	Proceed to Phase II	Swim 600 yards	Swim 600 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards Rest 5 minutes Swim 100 yards
Step 6	Proceed to Phase II	Proceed to Phase III	Swim 1000 yards
Step 7	Proceed to Phase II	Proceed to Phase III	Increase speed, continue at 1000 yards. If adding a second stroke – start at 100 to 300 (Phase I). If returning to competition, may return to formal practice when all needed strokes have been performed to the 1000 yard level with increased speed.