

Interview with an anonymous elite athlete who recovered from Covid-19

• How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact your life as an athlete?

Fortunately, my case was mild, and I was able to at least keep up with my walking routine every morning. I had to stop any hard activity.

• How did you cope with this, practically?

It wasn't easy to cope with the situation as I was worried about any development in my symptoms. But after the first week when everything seemed to be stable I started to cope with it and just thought to be patient and wait to recover.

• What strategies did you have to cope with this, mentally?

Despite being alone for more than 3 weeks, I was in contact with my family and friends all the time. I tried to keep myself as busy as possible: so, I learned a few healthy recipes, walked outdoor for an hour every day, did some reading and planned for my return to handball.

• How did you find out you had Covid-19?

From the first test I had at the airport coming back from London.

• Do you know how you got it?

Most likely while travelling back to Doha coming from the United Kingdom.

• What happened after you found out you had covid-19?

I was taken into quarantine.

• What symptoms did you have?

Mild cough, headache and loss of taste.

• Who guided your treatment?

I didn't get any special treatment only Panadol if needed.

• Where did you get your information about COVID-19?

Through social media and the news.

• Did the information reassure you? Or make you more worried?

I was in two minds about it. Sometimes, I was very worried that the symptoms may develop and that this could affect me personally and my sport life and I was thinking a lot whether I would be able to live normally as before without being effected especially in my sport performance.

- **Could you still exercise?**

Yes. but very mild exercises.

- **What mental effect did it have?**

I felt lonely most of the times. I was worried about my family as well all the time.

- **How long did it take you to recover and how are you now?**

I'm back to normal now. It took 4-5 weeks before I was tested negative.

- **Did you get back to normal training, if yes, how long did it take before you were able to go back to normal training?**

We are not training at the moment but soon we will. I believe I can get back to training normally now after 8 weeks.

- **Were you scared not to be able to get back to your normal training?**

Very Much. That was one of the scariest thing I have ever had to think about.

- **Do you have any advice for other athletes with Covid-19?**

It's very important that everyone follows the precautionary measures and stays patient, you will go over it sooner than you know it.