

NTRP MEDICAL APPEAL PROCEDURES- QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is a Medical Appeal?

A medical appeal is a formal, online request form from a player for reconsideration of his/her NTRP Rating based on a permanent, disabling illness or injury that has occurred since the player generated the year-end or early-start NTRP Rating. The medical appeal must be submitted online using our form for consideration. USTA League Regulation 2.05D states, "If an intervening, permanently disabling injury or illness indicates that a player's current computer rating may be too high, the player may request a medical appeal of such rating in accordance with NTRP Medical Appeal Procedures."

2. Who can file a medical appeal of a player's NTRP Rating?

Only the player whose rating is being appealed can file an appeal. A team captain, another player, a spouse or a physician may not file an appeal on the player's behalf.

3. Where should a medical appeal be filed?

Medical appeals can be found on USTA Eastern's website [here](#).

4. What would prevent a medical appeal from being considered?

A medical appeal would not be reviewed and/or considered if:

- a. player's NTRP Rating is no longer current or valid; player may self-rate.
- b. onset of player's illness or injury occurred prior to playing the last match used to generate their most current Year End or Early Start NTRP rating level.
- c. player does not complete and submit all required information.
- d. information submitted by player is not current.
- e. Attending Physician's Statement is not current and/or does not include required information.
- f. player has not been medically released to play tennis.
- g. registration for the league season, in which player desires to play, does not begin close to the time of filing, but at some point in the future.

5. What information must be included to submit a medical appeal?

All information that must be included is outlined on the online medical appeal form.

6. What is not considered in the review of a medical appeal?

- a. A statement from the attending physician stating what specific NTRP level the player should play. It is the responsibility of the committee to determine the skill level where the player should play.
- b. Statements from the physician like:
 - (1) "Mr. Smith has asked me to request that he be allowed to move down from 4.0 as he feels he can no longer compete at that level."
 - (2) "Mrs. Jones has shown considerable improvement since starting on her medication but, her illness or limitations will progress over time and is therefore permanent." (This may be true but does not refer to current status.)
 - (3) "Mr. Ross would like to play with his friends, spouse, etc."
 - (4) "Ms. Harris may need surgery in the future." (Not current status)

7. What determines if a medical appeal is granted?

Each medical appeal is thoroughly reviewed and considered on an individual basis. A decision is based on the current, specific information that is submitted about the diagnosis, onset and extent of the player's illness or injury, the specific limitations present, whether the current limitations are permanently disabling and whether the specific limitations will impact the player's NTRP skill level.

Very few medical appeals should be granted, as it is usually better to let the computer determine the NTRP Skill Level based on actual match play. Rationale:

- If the illness or injury is not permanently disabling, an appeal cannot be granted even if treatment, recovery and/or rehabilitation may take a year or longer.
- Individuals respond to illnesses and/or injuries in different ways so it is hard to predict the impact on their skill level.

- Many illnesses, such as osteoarthritis, are chronic, progressive, permanent conditions. However, the rate of progression of the illness, resulting symptoms and degree of impairment, as well as reaction to medication and treatment, varies in different people.
- Most individuals actually play better after knee, hip and shoulder surgery due to decrease in pain and possible increase in mobility from their pre-operative status.
- Many individuals who have heart disease, cancer, etc., if medically released to play tennis, will probably be able to play at their previous skill level.
- If medically released to play tennis, potential pain, shortness of breath and risk of injury should not be factors in determining NTRP skill level, as these could occur no matter what NTRP level playing.
- Endurance issues may occur at any skill level and vary from individual to individual. More energy may be exerted at the lower skill levels than the higher skill levels depending on the player's style of play, court position and placement of the ball. Therefore, the amount of energy exerted while playing tennis varies in individuals and cannot be accurately predicted.

8. Can a player be disqualified if a medical appeal is granted?

Yes. He/She is assigned a 0.0 start level and is subject to dynamic disqualification and NTRP grievances.

9. What is the procedure for reviewing medical appeals and making a decision on the appeal?

(Refer to USTA League Regulations 2.05D)

- A player's NTRP Medical Appeal will be reviewed and considered by the appropriate Medical Review Committee as designated by the player's section.
- The section's designated Medical Review Committee will either deny the appeal or, refer the appeal to the National Medical Appeal Committee for further consideration.
- If the section's designated Medical Review Committee denies the appeal, their decision is final and binding and there is no further right of appeal.
- If the section's designated Medical Review Committee refers the appeal to the National Medical Appeal Committee for further consideration, the National Medical Appeal Committee will review the appeal and make a final decision to grant or deny the appeal.
- If the National Medical Appeal Committee denies the appeal, their decision is final and binding and there is no further right of appeal.

10. Who should serve on a League Medical Review/Appeal Committee?

- A minimum of three persons, one of whom shall serve as chair.
- Individuals who are very league knowledgeable including knowledge of NTRP skill levels.
- Individuals who have current medical knowledge are recommended.
- A medical consultant is required to be accessible to the committee for consultation and input as needed.

11. What are the responsibilities of the League Medical Review/Appeal Committees?

The committee's responsibilities are to:

- make sure all required information has been completed, submitted and is current.
- determine if the player has sustained a permanent, disabling injury or illness since playing the last match prior to the publication of the most current Year End or Early Start NTRP rating level.
- determine if the intervening, permanent illness or injury has impacted the player's skill level and resulted in an NTRP Rating that is currently too high.
- make sure the player appealing has been medically released to play when the medical appeal is filed, not at some point in the future.
- make sure the player appealing is planning to register for a league season close to the time of filing, not at some point in the future.
- send, in writing, the committee's decision to the player and the appropriate coordinator(s).
- maintain confidentiality of the player's medical information.

12. If an appeal is denied, does a player have the right to appeal the decision of a League Medical Review/Appeal Committee?

No. If either the Section Designated League Medical Review Committee or the National League Medical Appeal Committee denies a medical appeal; their decision is final and binding.