

Sports And Performance Nutrition

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Lecture-27: Lifestyle practices to enhance recovery

Hello everyone, we have been discussing strategies at length to enhance the recovery for athletes using the food modalities. So let us explore a few adjunct practices that athletes can practice to enhance their recovery from intense physical activity. Rehydrating, taking care of intake of adequate carbohydrates, proteins and good fats like omega 3 can help the repairing of muscle tissue to enhancing the glycogen store. Rest days where the athletes takes time off or pursues a hobby which is separate from the athletic training can be a big distraction which can help rejuvenate and bounce back to the athletic training. So recovery is the basis to the revitalization process. The right recovery protocol involving food, nutritional and performance supplements and the dietary practices and certain lifestyle practices can lower the aches and pains and dorms.

So these recovery practices along with the periodized training load can enhance training adaptation and improve exercise performance. So let us understand a few basic other lifestyle approaches to promote recovery. If you remember in the recent chapter where we were talking about training periodization where you want to have a high intensity workout planned with a lighter training session thereafter. Also doing activities such as stretching or even yoga can be very helpful.

These gentle movements can bring in mindfulness and also lower terms. So these lighter sessions of stretching can be incorporated in weekly training schedules to lower the training load. These recovery sessions can help lower fatigue which can be important in the recovery process. Getting down from a higher intensity training into gentle and lighter intensity of exercise can also help in clearing of the build up lactate. So active recovery can be very useful for higher intensity or longer duration of physical exercise.

Athletes often use compression garments or compression boots to aid recovery. These tight fitting clothes add to the pressure and prevent delayed onset muscle soreness. So they can be worn on limbs or trunk or you slip into the boots and an athlete can take some time off and rest in this process. Compression garments can improve recovery by increasing the blood supply and sometimes these procedures can also play on the mind of the athlete by enhancing the psychological perception that the athlete is taking care of several modalities to improve recovery. In a recent chapter when I was discussing training periodization in a weekly chart, I suggested that athletes can also use a swimming session for recovery.

So hydrotherapy is a very popular and easily accessible recovery mode. So swimming is a very popular and easily accessible hydrotherapy. Swimming is low impact and can also help cardio and improve blood supply. Since swimming is also low impact, it can be very helpful for athletes in injury management where there is a challenge either with the bone or the knee or

ligaments and impact sports have to be withheld. In the competition preparation or on the race day, I suggested certain cooling techniques and how they are very important in lowering the risk of heat stress.

A small ice pack is easily portable and can be carried for training or competition days. Also dabbing with the ice pack or even carrying some ice with a towel can help in the recovery process by lowering the core body temperature. An ice pack can enhance recovery by delaying fatigue. This can be very useful in hot and humid weather conditions particularly if it is a tournament day. So by delaying fatigue and lowering the risk of heat stress, an athlete can prolong his exercise time effectively.

On players in racquet sports such as badminton to tennis and of course for other outdoor sports such as marathon running, this cooling technique can be very helpful to enhance recovery. Ice baths have become the norm for elite athletes. After a hard workout when the body can be sore next day, in the peak season immersing in cold water can prevent doms and improve the recovery. Please remember ice baths can help with acute recovery but if you are off season and you are looking to increase your muscle mass or look for physique transformation, ice baths will prevent that. Next water therapy is also very useful for acute recovery where athletes will shift between tubs of cold and hot water.

You can use the similar modality even while showering. By alternating between hot water and cold water, you can reduce body aches and pains and improve recovery. A novice intervention is the use of laser therapy. This laser therapy can improve the repair process especially in injury. Laser therapy can be useful in injured athletes to hasten the healing process.

It is not uncommon now where athletes will plan for a recovery massage or a sports massage on rest days to help them and support the recovery process. A massage can be refreshing and can lower the pains and aches when they take some time off after a massage session and that can help them mentally and physically. In the chapter on recovery, I did highlight how wearable technology is giving metrics to track. The collected data may indirectly support recovery where the cumulative data can help track the progress and pick up cues for red flags. Thereby the athlete can focus on the recovery protocol.

So to summarize, in addition to the correct food and fluid practices, other adjunct recovery practices can lower delayed onset muscle soreness and enhance recovery from novice to elite athletes to fitness enthusiasts. Athletes have a wide variety of choices to boost their recovery by choosing lighter training sessions involving yoga, stretching, using compression garments to using heat and cold treatments. I hope this topic slightly deviating from the core nutrition was a refresher for you. Thank you for listening. We train about 5 hours a week.

It becomes really hectic and we are very prone to getting injured. I ended up with a shoulder impingement injury. I had to take a step back and go to the basics of how to recover really well. Under the guidance of Gita Mama, I have been able to take the right supplements such as collagen, the omega 3 which helped in my recovery stages. Obviously, taking the other aspects of recovery such as sleep and reducing the fat intake and carb intake also did help.

Now, I am back in my training and hoping for a better road and race ahead.