

## ***Recovery - The Key to Exercise Enjoyment and Performance***

After 15 years of National and International powerlifting competitions with training 3 to 4 days a week, 2 to 3 hours a day, 50 weeks of the year, I am convinced recovery is the key to enjoyment, performance and exercise longevity!

If you are just starting to exercise or a seasoned veteran of any physical activity such as running, weightlifting, CrossFit training, biking, swimming muscle and overall body recovery is very important and as you get older recovery its paramount!

Recovery includes, sleep, rest, eating, hydration and may also include the use of ice, heat, therapeutic massage and/or active release.

Research has shown that recovery after exercise is essential to muscle and tissue repair and strength building. This is even more critical after a heavy weight training session. A muscle needs anywhere from 24 to 48 hours to repair and rebuild, and working it again too soon simply leads to tissue breakdown instead of building. For weight training routines, never work the same muscles groups two days in a row.

After your workout or training following are a few of my personal suggestions:

1. Cool down
2. Stretch
3. Replace fluids water, Gatorade, protein drinks, milk (avoid alcohol)
4. Eat within 30 to 60 minutes after your exercise – ensure you eat protein and complex carbohydrates to replace much needed nutrients – eating within 60 minutes will
5. Rest the specific muscle group 24 to 48 hours
6. Make ice your best friend – it reduces minor muscle pain and helps get blood in those muscles
7. Use heat when necessary
8. Avoid over training – there is nothing worse
9. Use Massage
10. Use Active Release
11. If pain persists, back off and visit your – working through the wrong kind of pain can result in serious injury and long rehabs
12. Be smart and listen to your body – it's the only one you have

Deep tissue or sports therapeutic massage once a week and active release as needed. Active release is an extreme version of deep tissue or sports massage. Active release targets specific problems, identifies the

Be careful with heat. Two weeks prior to setting my 2011 Guinness World Record I pinched a nerve between two ribs. The pain was so intense I couldn't sleep in any position and ice does now work well on nerve related injuries. I resorted to an electric heat pad. It worked wonders with reducing the pain and allowed me to fall asleep. Unfortunately, the pain related to the pinched nerve was greater than the pain related to falling asleep while lying on a heating pad for 8 hours. In the morning, much to my dismay, the nerve pain was gone and replaced with pain from a 2 inch x 3 inch 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burn on my back, resulting in a permanent scare.

In closing, remember its exercise, you decide when, where, how long. You also decide how to recover. It's one thing to work through minor exercise fatigue, it's another thing to avoid recovery and

Weekend warriors, beware!

Remember if it was easy everyone would do it and it is exercise. So it will hurt from time to time. Be smart and take time to recover properly and you will be at your passion until your 90!

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