

The Importance of Stretching and Proper Nutrition in Athletes

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Stretching and proper nutrition and hydration can lead to quick recovery.

◆ 8 Ways to Recover Quickly After Exercise

- Rest – time is one of the best ways to recover (or heal) from just about any illness or injury, and also works after a hard workout.
- Stretch – If you only do one thing after a tough workout, **STRETCH**. This is a simple and fast way to help your muscles recover.
- Eat Properly – You need to refuel your energy stores if you expect your body to recover, repair tissues, get stronger and be ready for the next challenge.



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- ◆ 8 Ways to Recover Quickly After Exercise
 - Replace Fluids – You lose a lot of fluids during exercise and ideally, you should be replacing it during exercise, but filling up after exercise is an easy way to boost your recovery.
 - Try active recovery – Easy, gentle movement improves circulation which helps promote nutrient and waste product transport throughout the body.



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◆ 8 Ways to Recover Quickly After Exercise

- Get Lots of Sleep – Optimal sleep is essential for anyone who exercises regularly. During sleep, your body produces growth hormone which is largely responsible for tissue growth and repair.

- Avoid Overtraining – One simple way to recover faster is to avoid excessive exercise, heavy training at every session or a lack of rest days will limit your fitness gains from exercise and undermine your recovery efforts.



Stretching

- ◆ A few questions to ask yourself:
 - Can I prepare to move by standing still for extended periods of time?
 - Should I move slowly or not at all to prepare myself to move quickly?
 - Should I sit down and be still to prepare to be on my feet and moving?
 - You should have answered NO to all of the above.



Stretching

◆ If you took rubberbands out of the freezer and prepared to use them by stretching them , what do you think would happen?

– You would easily break quite a few. This is why athletes frequently pull muscles, by working out without a stretching program.



Dynamic Stretching

- ◆ Research proves that it will:
 - Result in faster sprint times.
 - Improved agility
 - Increased functional ability
- We have a handout of examples of Dynamic Stretches.



Adequate Fluid Intake for Athletes

- ◆ Two simple methods of estimating adequate hydration:
 - **Monitoring urine volume output and color.** A large amount of light colored, diluted urine probably means you are hydrated; dark colored, concentrated urine probably means you are dehydrated.
 - **Weighing yourself before and after exercise.** Any weight lost is likely from fluid, so try to drink enough to replenish those losses. Any weight gain could mean you are drinking more than you need.



What about Sports Drinks?



- ◆ Sports drinks can be helpful to athletes who are exercising at a high intensity for 60 minutes or more.
- ◆ Fluids supplying 60 to 100 calories per 8 ounces helps to supply the needed calories required for continuous performance.
- ◆ It's really not necessary to replace losses of sodium, potassium and other electrolytes during exercise since you're unlikely to deplete your body's stores of these minerals during normal training.

General Guidelines for Fluid Needs During Exercise

✦ Hydration Before Exercise

- Drink about 15-20 fl oz, 2-3 hours before exercise
- Drink 8-10 fl oz 10-15 min before exercise

✦ Hydration During Exercise

- Drink 8-10 fl oz every 10-15 min during exercise
- If exercising longer than 90 minutes, drink 8-10 fl oz of a sports drink (with no more than 8 percent carbohydrate) every 15 - 30 minutes.

✦ Hydration After Exercise

- Weigh yourself before and after exercise and replace fluid losses.
- Drink 20-24 fl oz water for every 1 lb lost.

TEAM CONCEPT

- ◆ Coaches
- ◆ Athletic Trainer
- ◆ Athletic Director
- ◆ Physicians, Physicians' Assistant
- ◆ Physical Therapist
- ◆ Parents
- ◆ THE ATHLETE

– We all work together for a successful recovery and/or preventing sports injuries.