

REST AND RECOVERY



Five Essential Elements

Rest and recovery are critical components of any successful training program. They allow for improved performance, give the body time to heal in preparation for the next workout, and decrease the risk of injury. **Rest** is simple to understand and implement. It refers to the combination of sleep and time spent not training. **Recovery** refers to the techniques and actions used to maximize the body's repair. The two parts work together to help us make the most of our workouts.

The Essential Elements of Rest and Recovery



Sleep

Getting enough quality sleep may be the most important aspect of rest and recovery. Adequate sleep helps support mental health, hormonal balance, and muscular recovery. Ideally, you should aim for 7 to 10 hours of sleep per night, but optimum sleep is different for everyone. A few tips:

- ▶ It's best to sleep as much as possible during hours of darkness.
- ▶ Fresh air and cooler temperatures help improve sleep quality, so consider opening the window when the weather allows.

Hydration

Water makes up roughly 65% of the human body, so making sure you stay hydrated is essential for proper function properly and optimal energy levels. When it comes to exercise, it supports recovery and performance. Drink up during exercise, but also before, after, and in between to be sure you're getting enough throughout the day.

- ▶ Water is best. Electrolyte-replacement drinks (store-bought or homemade) are only needed during strenuous training or competition.
- ▶ Water flavour enhancers just give your system more to process. Stick to natural add-ins like lemon, lime, or berries.





Nutrition

Food is fuel and everything you eat can help or hinder your body's performance. When we exercise, we burn energy, which means we need to re-fuel to allow muscles to recover. Research shows that proper nutrition before and after exercise directly impacts how we perform and how quickly we recover afterward.

- ▶ Eat clean foods that aren't processed and consume a balanced diet.
- ▶ Eat complex carbohydrates and lean proteins at a ratio of 3:1 before and after workouts.

Stretching

Stretching keeps muscles flexible and helps manage tightness. Stretching reduces muscle soreness after a workout. It also promotes proper posture when done throughout the day. Poor posture can lead to stiffness and pain, which can negatively impact our workouts.

- ▶ Don't skip your warm-up and cool-down. Dynamic stretching during your warm-up is best.
- ▶ Pay attention to how you sit and stand during the day and take stretch breaks if you sit for long periods.



Self-Myofascial Release (SMFR)

Tight muscles and trigger points sometimes need help to return to healthy normal tissue. Massage can be a good way to improve recovery times, but using a foam roller is a common (and more cost-effective) method to increase blood flow, decrease muscle inflammation, and reduce tightness.

- ▶ To foam roll properly, apply moderate pressure to a specific muscle using the roller and your body weight. Roll slowly – no more than one inch per second.

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