



## **Recovery – The Most Important Component of Your Training Program**

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Recovery is the most important aspect of a long term training program regardless of individual goals. You may be an athlete interested in running faster, jumping higher, and increasing strength or you may be someone focused on improving fitness levels and health. In either case, a quality training program must be adhered to on a consistent basis. However, the training program only provides the stimulus for change while the change itself actually occurs during the time between training sessions. In fact, the immediate effect of a properly designed training program is a decrease in physical ability. Training itself breaks down muscle tissue, suppresses function of the central nervous system, and depletes energy stores just to name a few of the acute negative effects on physical performance. In another words, you will leave your training session slower, weaker, and less fit than when you began that training session. This is a normal and necessary part of the training process.

Individuals vary in their ability to recover from training stress (stimulus for improvement) and will be greatly affected by rest, nutrition, age, and psychological stress levels. With that in mind, here are some tips for maximizing the results of your training program while enhancing your ability to achieve short and long term goals.

- Intense training sessions should be separated by at least 48 hours. Intensity, in this case, refers to a percentage of your maximum ability. Examples of high intensity components of training include maximal strength, speed, power, and high intensity endurance intervals.
- Light exercise between high intensity sessions will enhance the recovery and adaptation process. Examples include walking, stretching, or training at a submaximal level. These would be classified as light to moderate training days.
- Everybody will experience some days that are not that great from a training standpoint. When these days become more and more consistent, there is a need to back off from training and let the body repair itself. Too many people get caught up in not missing a regularly scheduled workout session no matter what. I admire the discipline, but this can impede progress and actually set your fitness levels back.
- Regular sleeping patterns are essential for progress because most recovery and adaptation from the training stimulus will occur during sleep. Everybody is different but most people will need 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night. By the way, an inability to get a solid night of sleep is actually a sign of the body breaking down from too much training and stress.
- Proper nutrition is another essential part of successful recovery from training. Too many people go directly from their training session to school, practice, or work without consuming anything. The first hour after completing a training session may be the most critical time of the entire day for consuming carbohydrates to replace muscle glycogen and protein to begin rebuilding broken down muscle tissue. It may not always be convenient to eat after training but it is absolutely necessary. This is the reason we offer a couple of different post-workout recovery shakes in a convenient plastic bottle that just needs water added. No excuses for skipping the post-workout window of opportunity to maximize progress from your training!