

THE WHOLE ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

FCU SPORTS PERFORMANCE



RECOVERY I: SELF-CARE

October 2018, Issue 2 discusses Self-Care Recovery, which is the easiest form of injury prevention and performance enhancement.

To many, the PHYSICAL side of the WHOLE ATHLETE, means training hard, endless hours of skill practice, and winning championships. In the sport world, there is a major component missing in the understanding of player development.

Athletes develop into great players for several reasons, but the least discussed reason is how effectively a player recovers. *This is the absolute key to long-term success.*

Training young athletes involves balancing the demand of practice and competition with rest and recovery. Many of the athletes within this club participate in sports practice four or five days per week, compete once or twice per week, and strength train two or three days per week. The importance of active rest and recovery is commonly undervalued and underrepresented. Because youth athletes are still growing and developing, they actually need more time than adults for recovery between high-intensity training sessions.

Recovery is more than just time off.

In fact, time off should be one of the last actions taken in restoring an athlete's game. If injury ensues, then time off may be appropriate, but this option is the LAST part of the recovery continuum. There are many more steps you SHOULD take before recovery must mean time away from the game.

Adjust your understanding of training. Training is NOT just the practice session, the elite camp, or the games. TRAINING = RECOVERY.

RECOVERY IS THE BIGGEST GAME CHANGER IN SPORT RIGHT NOW.

OUR ATHLETES TRAIN HARDER AND LONGER THAN KIDS DID 5,10, OR 15+ YEARS AGO.

THEY SHARE SIMILAR WEEKLY TRAINING SCHEDULES TO SOME FULL-TIME OR COLLEGE ATHLETES.

IF THEY TRAIN LIKE PROS, THEN THEY NEED TO RECOVER LIKE PROS.

SELF-CARE EXPLAINED

Self-Care is the easiest recovery tool. This is the athlete's first defense against injury and it should be the athlete's automatic performance enhancer.

Understand that every practice or game session takes a toll on your body. The info-graphic below illustrates the effects of one game. In the professional level players tested in this study, it took up to 3 days to fully recover. This begs the question-Why are athletes not given more recovery days then? **The reality is - your training schedule does not allow for maximum recovery because, as athletes, part of the adaptation process is to respond to the stressful demands of the sport.**

This does not mean an athlete should feel stiff and sore all the time. Implementing a DAILY self-care routine with the tools listed below can minimize EXERCISE INDUCED MUSCLE DAMAGE and FATIGUE so that you can get the most out of each training session or game.

SAFE AND EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR ACUTE (DAILY) RECOVERY -

MYOFASCIAL RELEASE

ACTIVE RECOVERY

HYDROTHERAPY

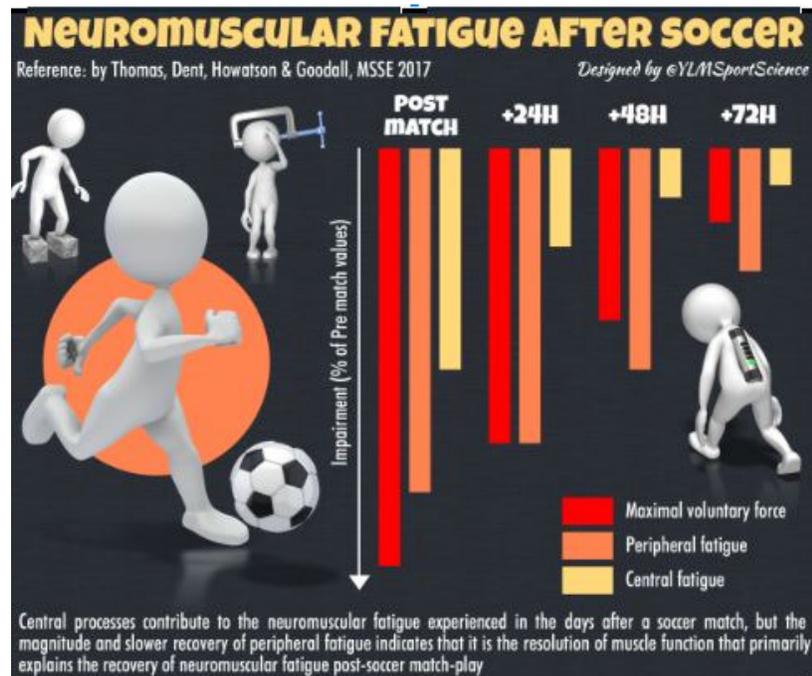
ENDURANCE, LOW-IMPACT EXERCISE

STRETCHING

COMPRESSION GARMENTS

ICE AND HEAT ALTERNATED

POST-SESSION NUTRITION



POST-EXERCISE RECOVERY NUTRITION:

The purpose of fuel following exercise is to support the recovery and repair of a youth athlete's growing body and to replace liver and muscle glycogen stores that were lost during exercise.

Post-exercise snack, hydration, and meals should contain both carbohydrate (20grams) and protein (15-20grams). Consumption of foods high in carbohydrate with moderate protein following exercise helps to restore muscle glycogen and facilitate muscle repair. Balanced fluids with these energy substrates will allow for better storage.

Youth athletes should consume their post-exercise fuel immediately within finishing. Then have them eat their meal or snack within 30-60 minutes of finishing, which is when the muscles are "primed" for energy uptake.

TIMING AND QUALITY OF FOOD MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Taylor's Fluid Tips -

Before Exercise: 14-22oz of fluid (water, diluted juice)

During Exercise: 6-12oz of water or lightly sugared sports drink every 15-20min (G2, Water + Electrolyte)

After Exercise: 16-24oz of water or lightly sugared recovery drink for every pound of body mass lost from sweat (Beet Elite)

RECOVERY MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO TRAIN AT THE LEVEL NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE YOUR GREATNESS.

TAYLOR'S TIPS

RECOMMENDED SELF-CARE ROUTINE -

1. One day-off a week. This is for both physical and psychological rest. Understand that stress in an athlete's life comes from several areas. Added stress= attenuated recovery. Every athlete should allot one day per week for complete rest.

2. Stretching and mobility restores the muscles' elasticity and function after damage. Stretch and mobilize daily. 10-15 minutes before and you'll see quick benefits. This also facilitates a higher quality sleep, as stretching activates your parasympathetic nervous system. The PNS cues the body's restorative mechanisms.

This is best on active recovery days for 30-40minutes, and on practice days before and after sessions

3. Take in Proper Recovery-Aiding Foods: Polyphenols, Antioxidants, REhydration, and Anti-Inflammatories.

My recommendation - Tart Cherry Juice -50/60ML per day
Tart Cherry Juice is a heavily researched recovery aid that has been proven to reduce the extent of muscle damage.

*** This is best at night, before bed*

Nutrition and Fueling is another topic in this series that I will address in detail separately. Until then, view this link:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/sportsmedicine/services/sports-nutrition/assets/recovery-fact-sheet-2015.pdf>

4. Soft Tissue and Manual Therapy: When muscles repeatedly contract and expand rapidly, often an adhesion will occur between muscle fibers, in the fascia that surrounds the tissue. We call these "knots". Myo-fascial therapy techniques with a lacrosse ball, massage, and foam rolling on a HARD, DENSE roller will break up an adhesion and restore the soft tissue quality and function.

This is best before training or game sessions

LOOKING AHEAD:

If you have questions about your athlete's recovery self-care routine, please email me at Taylor.h@fcunitedpremier.com I look forward to hearing from you!

The next newsletter will take a more in-depth approach to discussing recovery nutrition. Stay tuned!

Food For Thought: With the winter months approaching, start thinking about how you will take care of your body during the off-season training time.

5. Low-Impact, moderate intensity exercise on non-training days maintains fitness levels and accelerates recovery. I am fan of low-impact training for field-sport athletes. The constant changes in directions and speeds, aggressive contact from other players, combined with the ground reaction forces your body must absorb while running load an excessive amount of sheering forces into the body's joints. Do your body a favor and give yourself one day a week to swim, cycle, or core train. This deloads the joints without detraining the rest of the body. View this link for low-impact training ideas:

<https://www.thisisinsider.com/low-impact-workouts-burn-most-calories-2018-10#kettlebell-routines-will-work-your-entire-body-2>

This is best as an active recovery day exercise

6. Sleep: The body heels faster while asleep. Sleep is the single most effective recovery strategy for athletes. Poor sleep= interrupted or shortened sleep cycles. Poor sleep reduces hormone production, which increases muscle inflammation, and decreases Central Nervous System Functioning, which means less strength, power, accurate decision making, and impeded nutrition storage.

Good news: Following a shortened sleep cycle, research shows that CNS function will improve with a short nap!

AS RECOVERY IS A RELATIVELY NEW AREA OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, ATHLETES ARE ENCOURAGED TO EXPERIMENT WITH VARIOUS RECOVERY TECHNIQUES TO IDENTIFY USEFUL INDIVIDUALIZED RECOVERY STRATEGIES.

Follow Me on Instagram @The_Whole_Athlete_Experience
Tips & Cool videos for at-home stretching & exercise examples.

- Taylor Hynes