

RECOVERY / FLUSH / REGENERATION / WORKOUTS

The Workout

- 5 min massages (stick, manual massage or foam roll-out)
- 10-20 minute light cardiovascular exercise
- 5-10 min active mobility (movement) exercises
- 5-10 min cool down/static stretching exercises

Rationale

After intense physical activity the body is left damaged. The damaged tissues caused by aggressive exercise can leave a muscle damaged for up to 5 days depending upon the severity of torn tissue and recovery measures used. When the tissues are damaged, the body stimulates an inflammatory response. This response can have a negative impact on an athlete's ability to recover quickly. The inflammation creates extra pressure inside of the muscle, this pressure combined with the small tears within the muscle tissue interfere with the muscle's ability to change length. This loss of function is the science behind muscle stiffness post games, practices and workouts. Additionally, after stressful physical activity, muscles and connective tissues tighten as they heal. Over a long period, tissues can become very tight if left unaddressed and ultimately may lead an athlete to an injury or begin affecting an athlete's ability to move efficiently and fluidly. A recovery/flush workout can be a key ingredient to fast recoveries between games, practices and workouts. A proper recovery workout will help reduce inflammation, reduce muscle stiffness, elevate mood, alertness, energy level, reaction and promote tissue healing. A strategically developed recovery plan can not only help an athlete remain injury free, but can allow an athlete to dramatically increase his/her performance over the course of the season.

When

Ideally recovery workouts should be incorporated the day after intense physical activity. This is also the time when athletes begin to start experiencing a greater amount of muscle soreness otherwise known as: Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness (DOMS). Depending upon the severity of damage to the body, if needed; recovery workouts can be incorporated for more than one consecutive day.

Length

Workouts should not last any longer than 30 minutes and the intensity should be low to moderate. Often athletes have a hard time understanding the importance of low intensity exercise. These same athletes are typically the ones that do not show much progress in their training, are often hurt, sometimes over-trained or seem to always deal with nagging injuries that do not seem to heal. These athletes are the ones who are most in need of recovery based workouts. A good recovery workout will include light massage (foam roll), then light cardiovascular exercise followed by exercises that focus on active mobility and lastly flexibility.

Intensity

Athletes can measure the intensity by being aware of breathing rate and by sweat rate. A good recovery workout will activate the lungs so that breathing is slightly elevated and should stimulate a light sweat. Remember the goal of a recovery workout is to not add extra physical stress to your body, but to activate the body and loosen it up.

How to:

PELOT PERFORMANCE COACHING

- 1) The ideal recovery workout will start with light cardiovascular exercise that has low to zero impact. Exercises that involve high impacts such as running at high speeds or sprinting, will add more stress to an already stressed body, thus defeating the purpose of the workout all together. The purpose is to increase blood circulation to help flush the muscles with new, oxygen rich blood and other healing nutrients
 - a. Examples: Stationary bikes, elliptical trainers, pools, light jogs, jump rope, rowers
- 2) After 10-20 min of light cardiovascular exercise, the body is warm, the heart rate is elevated and the lungs are activated the focus should on active mobility. Mobility is similar to flexibility, but not. Mobility typically refers to range of motion (ROM) or range of movement while flexibility typically refers to a specific muscle group, tendon or ligament. When focusing on mobility it is important to challenge range of motion by flexing, extending, twisting, and bending in multiple different directions. Doing this will help break through the stiffness inside of the muscle. Active mobility refers to challenging movement ability of the trunk, hips, shoulders, etc... while in motion.
 - a. Examples: lunging movements, rotational movements , barrier walks, hip circles, arm circles, spiderman crawls, squatting movements, torso twists, trunk circles
- 3) After going through a light warm-up and an active mobility routine, incorporating a good cool down will set the body up to heal quickly. This can be done by focusing on static flexibility. To do this, perform exercises on the floor that require muscles to be held in an elongated position w/ mild tension for an extended period of time (45sec-1 min). This will promote the muscle's ability to relax and heal.
 - a. Examples: Hurdler hip flexor stretch, hurdler hamstring stretch, lying knee to chest stretch, butterfly stretch, static deep squat stretch, face down crossed leg glute stretch, lying face up hip rotational stretch.