

5 Essential Parts to Recovery & Better Results

One of the most commonly overlooked aspects of your fitness is your recovery. Studies show that a lack of recovery can reduce your fitness gains substantially and increase the chance for injury. Follow these simple tips and your body won't just feel better it will look better.

1. Sleep

The Problem

Over 35% of all Americans are sleep deprived, meaning that 1 in 3 people are not getting the recommended seven hours of sleep nightly. "Sleeping less than seven hours per day is associated with an increased risk of developing chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and frequent mental distress"

The Solution

To improve your sleeping pattern, make sure that you try to go to sleep at the same time every night, including weekends, if possible. If you are night exerciser, make sure to finish your workout at least three hours before bedtime as your body may not be able to relax enough for quality sleep.

Create a routine each night that including relaxing activities. Try dimming your lights and consider cutting out technology like your phone or TV an hour before bedtime. Light exposure suppresses your body's natural release of melatonin, a hormone that helps you maintain your circadian rhyme. A good night's rest is more than just giving your body a break but also allows your mind to shut down. Reading, meditating, and taking a hot shower are great ways to relax your body before bed.

Why It Works

During sleep, your body releases growth hormone, improving muscular recovery and regeneration. People who do not get enough sleep see decreases protein synthesis which is the body's ability to make muscle. Sleep allows your body to replenish nutrients that your muscles need to repair themselves, all necessary for optimal fitness progress. The longer that you sleep and the better you sleep directly impacts the number of calories that your body burns overnight.

2. Hydration

The Problem:

Most people are chronically dehydrated, leaving them with low energy and risk of muscle spasms. Dehydration makes you tired, irritable and less focused. It also makes digesting food more difficult. You probably drink other fluids like coffee or diet soda during the day, but drinking water regularly is the best way to stay hydrated.



The Solution:

Drink a glass of water with each meal. You might forget to drink water while you're running around during the day, but you have time to drink during your meal. We suggest drinking water throughout the day with an end goal of consuming about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an ounce of water per every pound of body weight. You can actually eat your water, too: vegetables usually contain a fair amount of water and can offset your fluid intake.

Why It Works:

Drinking water during meals makes you feel fuller, helping you eat less. It also keeps you hydrated during the day so that you feel your best. Instead of being dehydrated and sluggish for your workout, you'll be ready to go. Water helps you digest vital nutrients and repair muscles damaged during exercise. During an intense workout, your muscles break down and are then rebuilt through protein synthesis, requiring water. If you are dehydrated, muscle growth will be slow and delay your recovery. Water will also aid in digestion of your post-recovery meal and allow you to better absorb nutrients. Finally, your heart rate recovers significantly faster after a tough session if you are fully hydrated.

3. Proper Fuel before and after exercise

The Problem

Proper eating habits can be the difference seeing and feeling significant results or not. It can often be overlooked by some athletes as they pack their gym bag in the morning or race to a class after work. In some cases if you don't have time to eat or hydrate before working out, it can leave you fatigued, hurting your ability to maximize your exercise session. Working out during the summer months also creates its own challenges. Working out dehydrated can leave you with low energy and at risk for muscle spasms. If you are exercising during the summer, make sure hydrate before, during, and after your workout.

The Solution

Pre-Workout We recommend trying to get all your nutritional needs from whole, real, unprocessed foods as opposed to store bought bars or processed packaged shakes. We look for 3 things in a pre-workout snack:

- Carbs (energy source)
- Satiety (so you're not hungry again in 20 mins)
- Digestibility (so that you're able to move easily and not have anything weighing you down)

The following foods can fit the bill:

- One piece of fruit like an apple or banana, or handful of berries
- Fruit smoothie
- Sprouted grain toast with almond butter and/or banana
- Homemade energy balls made with dried fruit, oats, nut butters, etc.



Don't forget that timing is really important. Ideally, you should be eating 2-3 hours before your workout. Obviously, that is much simpler if you have a 6:30pm HIIT class booked rather than a morning session. If do find yourself with less time to eat (like 45 minutes before a workout), your snack should be smaller and simpler, containing mostly carbs.

Post-Workout- It is vital that you eat after you exercise to replace the calories that you burned and replenish your body's glycogen stores. It is best to eat within 30 minutes of completing your workout. If you finished a GPT session which is based on metabolic resistance training (MRT), Noam suggests consuming at least 30 grams of lean protein. If you skip a meal after working out, your body will miss out on the necessary repair process, which may leave you fatigued in the short term, and delay you from meeting your fitness goals .

Depending on the time of your workout, Noam recommends the following combinations of protein and carbs to replenish your system:

- Egg white omelette with vegetables
- Protein shake
- Greek yogurt
- Lean meat or fish
- Rice and beans, if you avoid animal products

Why It Works

Keeping fuel sources in your body before, during and after your workout is key in maximizing your results. Making sure that you have a storage of glycogen in your body (carb source of energy that is usually burned first) is important in keeping your energy level up during a workout. Likewise, the replenishment of this is very important.

4. Foam Rolling

The Problem

Most of us are sedentary the majority of the day, as a result our joints and muscles get tight. This causes us discomfort and pain. After a day of working or a night sleep out body and blood flow is restricted. Just jumping into high intensity exercise movements can cause injury. Also post workout keeping that blood from just pooling in the body.

The Solution

Foam rolling is one of the ways to increase blood flow. You can do this in the beginning to warm up or the end of the workout to decrease soreness. Focus on the areas where you feel the most amount of tension before a workout. After the workout focus on the areas of the body that you concentrated on during the workout.

Why It Works



By stimulating blood flow in affected areas, **you**'ll increase oxygen to your sore/ damaged muscle fibers and reduce recovery time. **Foam rolling** can also be performed prior to exercise. Before exercise, **rolling** will increase tissue elasticity, range of motion and blood circulation.

[Follow our Youtube channel here and search for our foam rolling videos](#)

Amazon sells foam rollers for under \$10 so it's not a big financial investment! [Click here](#)

5. Planned rest days

The Problem

Most of us think that progress happens when we work out when in fact it happens when we rest. People who don't give themselves proper amounts of rest days between strength training and other high intensity workouts will actually prevent their body from building muscle tone and increase the chance for injury. Also not taking rest days can affect your nervous system and can negatively impact your hormones. This can zap your energy and cause your body to breakdown instead of build.

*If you are new to fitness you will experience significant soreness for a number of days. That's totally normal. If you exercise regularly, you shouldn't be constantly sore but after a particularly tough workout or starting a new routine you may experience soreness.

The Solution

We recommend that you give your body 24-48 hours to recover between intense sessions. If you are still sore, you may be overtraining--consider taking it easy for a few days. You can still do moderate to light cardio on your days off. Going for a light intensity hike or a long walk in the park. Doing mobility exercises. Also doing some mindful recovery such as meditation or light yoga can help with your nervous system recovery.

Why It Works

The muscles grow and the hormones reset when at rest. When you sleep or are in a state of relaxation your body can produce more of the hormones that help your body rebuild itself and keep your metabolism going.

