

POST TRAINING / GAME RECOVERY Guide for Athletes

Recovery should be planned to:

- Replenish energy stores
- Repair damaged tissues
- Increase protein structure of muscles
- Maintain muscle tissue and connective tissue integrity
- Maintain joint mobility and function



Immediately Post Training or Game

1. Drink 250 – 300 mls of water
2. Drink a high-quality protein / carbohydrate blend shake
3. Statically stretch using deep breaths

Then at Home

1. Cold Bath or Shower (during tournaments, not needed for weekly training)
2. Compression wear (high-quality, tight fitting)
3. Follow up meal (Protein and Carbohydrate) plus Omega 3 and Magnesium
4. Sleep in a dark room without electronic stimulation for 90 mins before sleep time



The WHY?



1. **Water for hydration**

A good idea is to weigh before and after training a 1 kg deficit = 1 litre of water lost. Get into the habit of sipping small amounts of water all day, every day. Maintain good hydration throughout the day and every day and drink at least 300mls of water within the first 20 minutes post-match / training.

2. **Carbohydrate Plus Protein Speeds Recovery**

Multiple research articles shows that combining protein with carbohydrate within 30 mins of exercise nearly doubles the insulin response, which results in more stored glycogen. One study found that athletes who refuelled with carbohydrate and protein had 100% greater muscle glycogen stores than those who only ate carbohydrate. Insulin was also highest in those who consumed a carbohydrate and protein drink. Have a good Protein / Carbohydrate blend recovery shake within 15 mins post-match / training.

3. **Static Stretching with focussed breathing**

Static stretching returns muscle tissues back to their original length after high intensity training and matches. Muscle fibres are made up of microscopic contractile units known as Sarcomeres, these vigorously shorten during muscle contraction. Without a dedicated time to returning these units back to their pre-training length, Muscles shorten and tendons pull on insertion points of joint structures causing joint pain. Shortened or tight muscles also decrease performance.

4. **Cold Bath or Shower**

Use cold showers to speed up recovery during prolonged tournaments to reduce post game intra-muscular inflammation. It enhances the recovery of muscle function and reduces delayed onset muscle soreness.

5. **Compression wear**

Compression garments promote a more rapid recovery of muscle function and reduce muscle soreness (Hill, et al. 2014)

6. **Post Training / Game Meal**

Ensure you eat a high-quality Protein with Vegetables including sweet potato and greens (broccoli, green beans, asparagus, spinach). Protein provides the amino acids necessary to rebuild muscle tissue that is damaged during intense, prolonged exercise. It increases the absorption of water from the intestines and improves muscle hydration. The amino acids in protein also stimulate the immune system, making you more resistant to colds and other infections.

7. **Sleep in a cool, dark room for at least 8 hours per night**

Insufficient Sleep in athletes increases fatigue, decreases readiness to train, increases soreness, decreases reaction time, decreases skill consolidation, increases risk of injury and alters hormone function (Fuller, et al. 2015)