



10 Tips for Injury Prevention and Optimal Performance

Thanks to Georgia Sports Chiropractic, our partner in developing a healthy, injury-free lifestyle for our endurance clients, we have developed a focused list of guidelines for your training and recovery so you can be the best that you can be. Whether a weekend 5k runner or a future Olympian, having an injury prevention plan in place is the best way to optimize performance and save a lot of money and heartache over your training career!

1 - Training AND Recovery Plan - As focused individuals, setting goals is nothing new, but remember that your health and fitness doesn't end with your training plan. Recovery needs to be integrated into your routine and not a mere afterthought. Include a daily routine for stretching, icing, sleep and any active recovery exercises that you need to stay healthy!

2 - Active Recovery - Time and time again, we hear about professional athletes who only really started hitting their potential after they learned to slow down. Recovery miles aren't junk miles, they are focused at slowing down and actively rehabilitating your body. If you think you're going slow enough, slow down some more! When world champions run their recovery jogs at 8:30min/mi you know you need to be slowing down!

3 - REST - Rest is different than active recovery! Learn to listen to your body and understand when you need a break. Your life is chock full of stressors that pile up to negatively impact your training and recovery. Learn to anticipate when you need to proactively rest due to intense work schedules, child care, less than optimal sleep, sickness, injury, and many other things that plague our daily schedules. Learn to anticipate your body's needs, not just in training, but in life, and you will reduce your injuries and increase the efficiency of your training!

4 - Mobility and Dynamic Stretching - ahem... YOGA - Obviously yoga is going to be in the mix here. It's not first and foremost because yoga certainly doesn't replace proper training and recovery. That being said, dynamic stretching and focused mobility work are essential to your active recovery plan for so many reasons.

The key to any successful training regimen is balance and that is exactly what we aim to bring to your life through postures specifically designed on opening your hips, quads, hamstrings, calves, feet, and back so that you can live your life injury free.

5 - Core and Functional Strength - ahem... YOGA - Ever been to a Yoga for Runners/Cyclists/Endurance Athletes Class? Vinyasa Yoga? No? Well then you may not know that this is not just static stretching. We will move you and use your body weight to improve your balance, core strength, and mobility to enhance your performance. Not only do we aim to reduce/eliminate your injuries, we want to make you a better all around athlete. Learning how to move your body and improve its functionality will give you the tools you need to develop in whatever you do. Oh yeah, and don't forget your core! Your abdominal wall, lower back and trunk are the platform from which your legs and arms propel you. Don't sacrifice all that work you do with your limbs because you have an underdeveloped core!!

6 - Hydration - Just do it. Stay hydrated. Proper hydration is the key to performance and to recovery. Don't skimp on drinking enough H₂O because you're not currently training. Hydration should occur all the time!

7 - Fuel/Nutrition - Training and recovery doesn't just come from what we do to the body, but how we feed it. Not only is food the fuel that propels us, proper nutrition contains the building blocks to repair our damaged and fatigued muscles, ligaments and tendons.

8 - RICE - The "RICE" method isn't just for focused injury repair. Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation is something that you can do after any hard workout. The best part is you can just sit on your couch or lay on the floor in front of your TV and take active recovery to a whole new level! Ice, compress, and elevate to reduce the inflammation in those damaged muscles and get your body ready for tomorrow!

9 - FIT - Poor bike fit, poor shoe fit, improper shoes, are all sources of a number of injuries that ail all of us. Spend the time, money and effort to get out to talk to someone who knows what they're doing. One size does not fit all in the world of endurance athletics, so invest in yourself beforehand to avoid dealing with it later!

10 - Know when to see a professional - This may be the hardest of all, but we all know it's true. Avoid getting to the point when your injury or nagging pain is unbearable and you are forced to take time off completely. Also know which professional to see. Too many times our doctors, therapists and chiropractors take a much too conservative view and sideline athletes so that they avoid liability and get you in the office more. See a sports professional, especially our friends at Georgia Sports Chiropractic and get back out there sooner and on sure footing!