

HOW TO AVOID **OVERTRAINING SYNDROME**

What is Overtraining?¹ When athletes do not respect the balance between training and recovery, they may push their bodies past their limit. The consequence may be long-term decrements in performance.

POTENTIAL WARNING SIGNS OF OVERTRAINING

- Unexplainable decreases in performance
- Increased rate of injury
- Insomnia/disturbed sleep patterns
- Weight loss
- Weakened Immune system
 - Athletes are more prone to illnesses, especially upper respiratory infections when there is not a balance between training and recovery
- Decrease in appetite
- Feelings of depression or anxiety
- For women: Irregular menstrual cycles, or amenorrhea



HOW TO TREAT OVERTRAINING

- Athletes should treat Overtraining Syndrome like an orthopedic injury.
 - It can be debilitating and take a substantial time to recover
 - Treat with rest or very light exercise
 - Address proper nutrition, sleep, or other overtraining related health issues
 - Slowly acclimate to normal training regimen

Regular alcohol consumption increases risk of illness and injury by depressing immune function and contributing to delayed healing.²

HOW TO AVOID OVERTRAINING

- Take a time-out. Get good rest and sleep. Athletes should consider taking one full rest day per week. Stress levels are known to decrease with rest and sleep.
- Eat well: Nutrition is important
 - Hard-training depletes carbohydrates and may result in dehydration
 - During hard training periods increase carbohydrate and hydration intake to match training intensity.
- Avoid excessive monotony of exercise
- Communicate with coaches and athletic trainer about your training plan

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- Training plans may differ from athlete to athlete
- Be aware of stressors and adjust training when appropriate
- Allow time for recovery after any injury or illness
- Treat overtraining with rest and light training

RESOURCES

- Athletic Trainers
- Team Doctors

¹ Meeusen, Romain, et al. "Prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the overtraining syndrome: ECSS position statement 'task force'." European Journal of Sport Science 6.01 (2006): 1-14.

² Alcohol and athletic performance. NCAA Sports Science Institute, 2013.