

BENEFITS OF USING A FOAM ROLLER

When you undertake a reasonably large exercise training load there is a fine line between recovery and overtraining. There are many different strategies that an athlete can adopt in order to promote sufficient recovery including correct recovery nutrition, adequate sleep, sufficient recovery time between hard training and adopting training periodisation principles. One thing athletes often overlook is body maintenance such as flexibility and massage, which, if neglected, can lead to injuries and/or muscle fatigue issues.



Massage and flexibility should not be seen as a chore but rather as an independent training session that prepares the body for your next hard workout. The benefits of Remedial Massage are well known and there are also some great self-massage techniques that can be done using a foam roller.

While not quite as effective as a professional Remedial Massage, if used regularly it can go a long way towards improving your flexibility and recovery post training. Here are the 4 main benefits of using exercise foam rollers.

1. Improves flexibility

Flexibility is especially important for sports like swimming and running (where it can help improve your performance) and can greatly help reduce injuries in sports like cycling.

2. Flushes lactic acid and promotes muscle recovery

Lactic acid can pool in the muscles leaving you feeling lethargic and heavy in the legs the day after a hard session. Using a foam roller after your workout and on recovery days can help reduce soreness and tightness.

3. Time efficient and convenient

The foam roller is a once off purchase of around \$30-\$40 and will last you for years. It can be used in the comfort of your own home and completed whilst watching TV or chatting with your family or friends. Small rollers can also be taken away with you on trips.



4. Assists with injury prevention

After hard workouts your muscles become tense due to the stress they have been placed under. If unattended, knots can form in the muscles which can then lead to injury. By using a foam roller you can 'iron out' the tight spots which can prevent injury trigger points.

Tips for using foam rollers

Foam rollers are very versatile in that they can be used on any part of the body. Aim for 1 minute on each muscle group unless you find any particularly sore spots that you may want to spend more time on in order to release. A session should last up to 20mins and you should aim for 2-3 sessions per week.