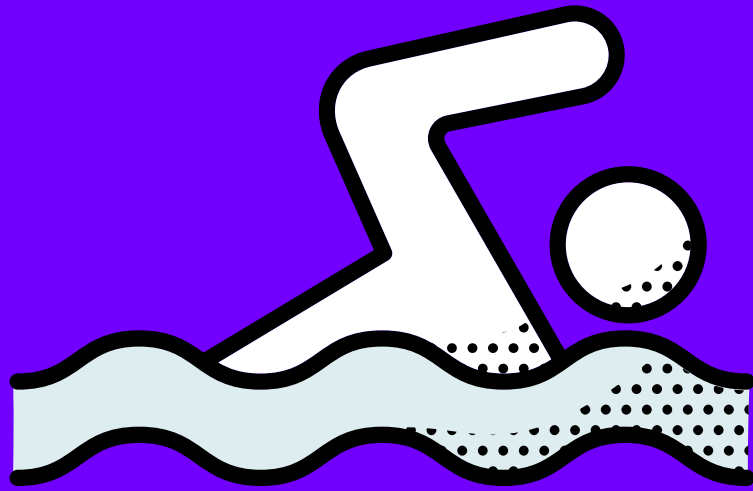




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STAYING FIT WHEN INJURED

By Phil Robertson - Fitness Aspirations

Unfortunately injuries are a common aspect of exercise

It's normally a by-product of overtraining, or under-recovering. Even the most careful planner of training, who rests often and works on injury prevention protocols, can still pick up injuries.

There are so many types of injuries out there, different levels of severity, and multiple potential causes; it can be a little confusing as to what to do.

5 steps to staying fit when injured

1 Diagnosis

It's vital to get the correct diagnosis of your injury so you can make a plan and a realistic time to return to your training.



2 Make a plan

Once you've been diagnosed with the injury, you can discuss a suitable rehabilitation plan with a professional. This will be composed of an initial rest period, various strengthening and flexibility exercises, and a gradual progression to get back running.

3

What to do

With a plan in place, you can now take action. Stay positive, be determined throughout, and you will see progression.

The majority of running related injuries will be some form of lower body injury. Whilst it may be initially advised to avoid load-bearing exercise through the injured areas, there will still be areas that can be worked and improved upon. Once you are at a stage of your rehabilitation whereby you are able to engage the affected area again, the work you have been doing will enable you to have a quicker training response to the strength work, and get you back running in a shorter amount of time. You will also feel much better for it.

Here are some things to incorporate into rehabilitation:

- **Resistance training**

Apart from maybe a few exceptions there is always some form of resistance, or weight training you can do. If your injury is lower body, then work your upper body. Upper body strength can improve running technique, posture, and breathing. If you have an upper body injury, then train your lower body. Strengthening your legs, and glutes, will greatly improve your running and help with future injury prevention. If you are unsure as what to do then discuss with a fitness professional, such as a personal trainer or physio, and get them to put a few programmes together for you.

- **Non impact cardio**

Gym machines such as a cross-trainer, rower, or exercise bike are extremely useful when it comes to rehabilitation. They can work your muscles, heart and lungs, increase blood flow throughout your body, and help with flexibility. This is providing that none of the movements will aggravate your injury.

- **Swimming**

Another great way to reduce the impact forces that are associated with running. Using floats can help target healthy areas whilst limiting movement of any injured area.

- **Body Maintenance**

Regular foam rolling, and flexibility work, is definitely a must when going through the process of injury through to recovery. Towards the latter stages of recovery, it may also be a good time to join a pilates or yoga class. Long muscles, healthy joints, and increased flexibility will go a long way in recovery, and reduce the chances of future injury.

4

Eat well

Something to really take note of is your nutrition. When an injury occurs there will generally be tearing, over stretching, swelling, bleeding and inflammation. Having poor nutritional intake will prevent the body from healing itself in the most efficient way. Ingesting processed foods, and drinks, will actually increase the inflammatory response in the body.



This will then slow down the recovery process and negatively affecting your health. Certain foods can in fact help decrease the inflammation within the body. This includes oily fish (such as salmon), green vegetables (such as broccoli and spinach), and nuts.

5

Return to action

Once you have gone through your rehabilitation, the injury has now fully healed and you've addressed the factors that caused the injury, you are ready to go.

It is so important that you focus on slow and steady progression, keep a training diary and ensure you give yourself plenty of recovery days. After a period of time away from an activity, the temptation is to do too much too soon.