

New Year's Resolution to be more active?

Try not to do too much too fast! Overtraining Syndrome



For athletes, one of the goals of training is to make physiological improvements. This applies to athletes of all forms - including the high level athlete, the regular athlete who runs, cycles, hikes or plays soccer twice or three times a week, and the weekend warrior. We all have fitness goals and at this time of year, we are often a bit too aggressive in trying to achieve these goals, which may lead to overtraining and often injury.

It is true that in order to make these improvements athletes must stress their bodies through a process called overloading. Overtraining syndrome can occur when the body does not have enough time to heal between training sessions, or the load to the system during training is too great. It is characterized by negative changes in a person's emotional, behavioral, and physical states.

Common signs and symptoms of overtraining:

- Decline in performance
- General fatigue
- Change in personality
- Change in sleep patterns
- Increased rate of infection (i.e. colds)
- Female menstrual cycle abnormalities
- Decrease in muscle size and strength

Prevention strategies

- 1. Incorporate rest days** into your weekly training schedule to allow your body ample time to repair itself. Allowing your body enough time to recover is essential to preventing overtraining syndrome.
- 2. Proper nutrition before, during, and after training.** During high-intensity workouts, a quick carbohydrate source (such as a banana or Gatorade) can help your muscles and brain function. Immediately following a high-intensity workout, athletes should eat a snack high in carbohydrates and protein to aid in muscle repair.
- 3. Warm up and cool down.** These activities can prevent injuries and reduce the amount of time needed to fully recover from a training session.
- 4. Early recognition** of common signs and symptoms, followed by a change in the training schedule can reduce the severity of overtraining syndrome.

* For more information on overtraining, including how to train better and avoid injury, please contact us at **604-983-6616** or at **info@body-works.ca**