

***RECOVERY METHODS
FOR ULTIMATE SPEED,
STRENGTH, AND
POWER***

BY:

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Hey!

First of all, thanks for taking the time to read what I wrote down for you. I really enjoy sharing information to athletes and people that truly care about bettering themselves - so more power to you!

This manual will detail some unique (but simple) methods, workouts, tools, and tricks to help you do one thing:

RECOVER FASTER.

Training hard is one thing, but if you neglect what you do *OUTSIDE* of the gym, the ability to perform at your best on any given day will suffer – big time.

It's really not all that complicated, but unfortunately most people don't take this very seriously! And by the time you're too fatigued to do anything about it, the damage will have been done!

That's a big mistake, but luckily you have some great content in your hands. After reading this, you will have many methods on how you can recover faster, which will in turn lead to greater gains in strength, speed, power, and conditioning.

Take action and use these strategies TODAY!

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Self-Myofascial Release (SMR)

The quality of your muscle tissue will depend greatly on how much time you put into some serious SMR. You'll need a foam roller, "The Stick", a tennis ball or lacrosse ball; basically anything you can roll on and apply some good pressure to what we call "trigger points" or adhesions. I've even used an old soup can before. I will even show you a simple way on how to make your own foam roller with a few dollars.



Why is this important? *Think about it like this:* You have a knot in a rubber band – no matter how hard you try to stretch the rubber band out, it can only go so far before the tension

created by the knot stops you from going any further, or worse case, the rubber band snaps (ouch); if the knot goes away by simply untying it AKA releasing tight areas in the muscle (or in our case, by utilizing SMR) your flexibility, mobility, and even your strength/power output will be improved by limiting the adhesions that can be created over time by hard training.

It's inevitable that you will get a little beat up from training; this makes it even more important for you to take care of your body in order to come back to the next training session firing on all cylinders (or as close to it as possible).

How to Foam Roll: It's pretty simple. We'll focus on the major muscle groups and areas that tend to get the majority of abuse: Thoracic Spine (Upper Back), Lats, Piriformis, Glutes, IT Band, Hamstrings, Calves/Achilles Tendon, and the Thigh Adductors (groin). I like to do this at night before going to bed; you can also opt to do this post-training, in the morning, or on off-days; you really can't foam roll "too much"! The more you do it, the better you will feel. It's one of those things that should be done on a daily basis.

You should roll up and down on the muscle group you're working on as needed. If I'm really sore on a given day I'll spend more time on that area, anywhere from 20 to as many as 50 rolls; if you're doing this in a warm-up, or on an off-day for some active recovery work, maybe tone down the volume a little. Either way you should be getting some sort of soft-tissue work in.



(Image property of: CrossFit Invictus.)

Not sure where to get a foam roller? You can buy one from most gym equipment supply stores. I like the black ones from Axis as they are a little denser and don't lose their shape like the regular white rollers do. You can also get a 3 to 4 foot length of PVC pipe and use that if you really want to go with some dense material; you can wrap some foam insulation around the PVC pipe as well to act like a homemade foam roller. I've made a few of these up myself and they work great. You can check out a great "how-to" tutorial video here: [How to Make Your Own Foam Roller](#).

If you can afford it, opt for a deep-tissue massage 1-2 times a month from a professional masseuse. This will really help out, especially since someone else can actually give feedback to you; plus hands can penetrate a little deeper. (Insert "that's what she said joke" here, ha!)

Dynamic Flexibility, Mobility, Stretching

Often times, the dynamic warm-ups I use with my athletes would often serve very well for a recovery workout in between hard training sessions. Most of the time, we're either training 3 days per week or 4 days per week. The "off" days leave us some time to work on some problematic areas that each person has. Plus, the added benefit of moving around on

your off days with some low-intensity movements will help facilitate faster recovery due to the fact that you're getting some nutrient-rich blood back into some tight/sore areas from previous training sessions.



“Pretty damn good Dynamic flexibility shown above!”

No need to go very fancy on these days. A simple 15-20 minute warm-up that gets a light sweat going is great. Everyone is different, but normally I would stick to movements that target the following:

- Hip Mobility

- Thoracic Spine Mobility

- Ankle Mobility

- Shoulder Stability/Mobility

- Glute Activation

After getting in some basic movement prep and you're warm, you can do some basic static stretches for 10-15 minutes on areas that you have problems with. Most people are tight in the hip flexors, pecs, gluteus/piriformis, hamstrings, groin/adductors, and calves. Wouldn't hurt to stretch these muscle groups out on your off days to get some flexibility work in! After all, if you're tight, your range of motion on many of your lifts will be limited.

If you still aren't sure of how to properly perform a dynamic warm-up, I filmed a sample video for you. You can check that out here: [Dynamic Warm-Up Video](#)

Low-Intensity Workouts

I usually will recommend some form of low-intensity movement on off days, for a number of reasons.

First off, they help keep body fat levels in check. Even if you're trying to get big and strong, it doesn't mean you have to pile on pounds of fat in the process and put your health at risk.

Secondly, this type of work won't interfere with your strength, speed, and power goals and most of the time (if you don't overdo it) will actually improve all of these qualities. The goal with this type of work is to act like a "flush" by promoting recovery, improving work capacity, improving general fitness, improving capillary density, and simply making you feel better.

There are lots of methods you can choose from on these days. Choose from the list of following:

Jump Rope

This is a great exercise that really isn't done enough by most trainees. Get a jump rope and get moving. I like either jumping for given number of reps (i.e. 5 sets of 100 skips) or timed intervals (30 on, 30 off for 10 minutes). Get creative! Don't make this very complicated. You could do this as a warm-up, cool-down, part of a workout, etc.



"If it's good enough for Herschel, it's good enough for you!"

Tempo Runs

I first learned of these from the great, late sprint coach, Charlie Francis. Basically you just go out to a soft grass field, get a good warm-up in, and perform what is called tempo or rhythm runs. I usually have most all of my athletes do these 1-3 times per week, year round; the volume will vary depending on the time of year. Run anywhere from 50-300 yards at a pace that would be 65-70% of your best time. It really is ideal to run these on a softer surface to keep

wear and tear on the joints to a minimum; a flat grass field would be ideal. If you leave near a beach with decent sand you could do them there as well.



“Ben Johnson (L) and Coach Charlie Francis (R). Tempo runs were a staple in many of Charlie’s sprint training programs!”

This can get confusing when you involve percentages, I understand; just remember you should be able to finish at the same speed you started at. NO SPRINTING HERE. The goal is smooth, relaxed, rhythmic running. Keep the rest periods short too. For example, if you were to run 10 x 100 yards @ 65% effort, I would say rest 30-40 seconds between each run. As your fitness improves, extend the distances out. If you can perform Charlie Francis’ “Big Circuit” with no problems, you are in great shape! (See below)

Charlie Francis “Big Circuit”

1 means run the length (~100m) at tempo pace. 2 means run the length (~100m) turn around and run back (~200m).

+ Means walk the width (~30 seconds)

++ means walk the length (~60 seconds)

Charlie Francis "Big circuit":

1+1+1++

1+2+1+1++

1+1+2+2++

1+2+1+1++

1+1+1

Total volume is around 2200m.

I definitely suggest working your way up to 2,200m in total volume. This is harder than it looks!

Medicine Ball Throws

These are great for bigger guys, linemen, combat sport athletes/fighters, or simply anyone who for whatever reason wants to do something on their off day but doesn't want to go out and run. Maybe the weather isn't too hot right now. Maybe you have a leg injury but still need to maintain or improve cardiovascular fitness. Whatever the reason, it doesn't matter because these are great substitutions and will have you working up a sweat in no time.

You will need a light medicine ball (8-12 lbs.) and a partner or a wall that can rebound the ball back to you; so in other words, a ball that can bounce. Pick 4-5 different exercises at 20-25 throws each, pick a given number of throws to do and get to work!

The easiest way to start is by doing sets of 80-100 throws (total) and resting 60 seconds between rounds. This is great to get some general work capacity for the upper body, as well as give your legs a little bit of a break on off days. Example throws could be: chest pass forward, side tosses (both sides), 1-arm chest pass right, 1-arm chest pass left, ball slams to floor, etc.

You'll be surprised how fast these throws will add up! Stick with these; I once worked my way up to 1,080 throws in a single session. It can be done!



Example Medicine Ball Workout:

-Chest Pass x 25

-Side Toss Right x 25

-Side Toss Left x 25

-Ball Slam x 25

(Rest 60 seconds, repeat 2-10 times based on current fitness level and goals).

Bodyweight Workouts

The great thing about bodyweight training is that you don't need any equipment, you can do this type of work practically anywhere, and it's downright fun! Most people could use to get used to moving their own bodyweight around from time to time, instead of just banging away at the weights every day. This is great for improving coordination, balance, endurance, body composition, flexibility, mobility, and relative body strength.



On off days you could pick 3-5 exercises and perform them in circuit fashion. For example:

Push Ups x 20

Sit Ups x 20

Bodyweight Squats x 20

Burpee-Pull Ups x 20

Jump Rope x 100

Complete as many rounds of possible in 15-20 minutes. Looks easy on paper, but after 10 minutes you will be wondering when the clock will stop! 15-20 minutes of this type of work will be all you need to get the heart rate up, get some extra conditioning in, and improve your recovery in between hard training sessions!

Bands



Bands are awesome! They are easy on the joints, help promote blood flow, and don't really create a whole lot of muscle soreness. Performing exercises with bands can be done virtually anywhere provided you have somewhere to attach them to. I like movements like push-downs, face pulls, pull-aparts, rows, curls, etc. These should be done for recovery purposes for higher repetitions in the 25-50 rep range for a few sets with lighter bands.

Sled Dragging/Pushing



"Dan John practicing what he preaches. Image from DaveDraper.com"

Another great option to help promote recovery, increase conditioning levels, and even improves total body strength and endurance is by simply dragging a sled. Sled drags are great in

that they are a concentric-only exercise. No loaded stretch is placed on the muscle, so you can pretty much drag and push a heavy sled and not have to worry about being very sore the next day. If you don't have a sled, you can make one very easily by getting an old car tire to act as the dragging sled (can get these free at a local tire shop), a tow strap or rope to attach to the tire, and some weights to throw inside the tire. I've also thrown sandbags inside, small dumbbells, etc. Drag it, walk with it, pull it, walk backwards, shuffle, etc. This is really fun and breaks up the monotony of training. If you can walk, you can drag a sled!

Contrast Therapy

Contrast therapy can be summed up in one sentence: *It sucks, but you gotta do it!*

This is very simple to do; all you need is a shower. This can also be done if you have access to a hot and cold whirlpool, or hot tub and very cold swimming pool. You will alternate between immersing yourself (not fully) in hot and cold water. Always start and end with cold. These act as a pump mechanism by allowing the blood vessels to expand under the hot water and really promote blood flow, and constrict under the cold water. The constant vasodilatation and vasoconstriction will help rid some excess waste product from previous workouts; these also help promote growth-hormone release and do a great job at "waking up" the Central Nervous System!



“Yes, sometimes contrast therapy can look like this!”

The standard protocol calls for 1 min cold, 3 min hot; repeated 4 times total, starting and ending with cold. I’ve also seen 30 seconds cold, 2 minutes hot repeated 4-6 times; as well as 15 seconds cold, 45 seconds hot repeated 4-8 times. Whatever you do, just be sure to start and end with cold.

There is a ton of science on contrast therapy showing the positive effects and benefits, one that I won’t get into in this report. Just do them 1-3 times per week and reap the benefits! I prefer to do them before going to bed or first thing in the morning!

Example Recovery Workout

- 1.) Dynamic Warm Up, Mobility, Flexibility: 10-15 minutes
- 2.) Tempo Runs: 2 x 6 x 100 yards @ 65% effort; rest 30 seconds between reps, 60 seconds between sets OR 20 push-ups and 20 sit-ups in between runs, walk 200 yards between sets.
- 3.) Foam Roll, Long Stretch post tempo runs.

4.) Contrast Shower 1 minute cold, 3 minutes hot x 3-4 cycles.

5.) Eat!

I hope you enjoyed this report and learned some new tricks and tips on how you can recover faster in between hard workouts! After all, a solid workout program is not complete if you're slacking on your recovery! Just remember: the point of these workouts is not to go crazy with a ton of volume; just do enough to promote recovery and stay active. If your goals call for more work, then by all means do it. If you're trying to get big and strong, keep these sessions short and to the point.

The faster you recover the harder and more frequent you can train. I like to use analogies of recovery and exercise related to very expensive cars. A Ferrari is a high-powered machine, but must be tuned-up regularly if you want it to run optimally at all times. Same goes with you and your body. You need to have scheduled maintenance and restoration time to keep your chances of injury low and keep you in the game as long as possible. Injuries suck, but luckily most of the time they can be prevented with proper planning and attention to the little things.

Take care of yourself and you'll be in this game for years to come!

Time to feel better NOW!



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About the Author:

John Cortese, a former collegiate football/track athlete and graduate of Cal Poly-SLO, owns and operates [CTS Strength & Conditioning](#), a small warehouse gym in Napa, CA, where he trains middle school, high school, college, and professional athletes to get bigger, faster, and stronger for their sport! Find cool training videos and subscribe today on his [Youtube](#) page!

PS- For more great tips on becoming a better athlete, visit my blog linked below. Sign up and get **3 FREE exclusive gifts for joining! Click the link below to get 'em!**

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