



ELITE
PERSONAL TRAINING & FITNESS SOLUTIONS

HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

11/13 - What Should I Do on My Days Off from Training at EPT?

Introduction

Exercise is the poster child for when more is not necessarily better!

For this week's topic, I will address a common question - what should I be doing on my days off when I'm not training? As usual, there is no shortage of unqualified individuals providing a myriad of conflicting answers.

To answer this question, I must introduce three terms: metabolism, anabolism and catabolism.

There is enormous complexity [individuals have PhDs in various aspects of each of these terms], but I will simplify for our purposes.

Metabolism, Anabolism and Catabolism

Metabolism is a biochemical process that allows us to live, grow, reproduce, heal, fight off illness and adapt to our environment.

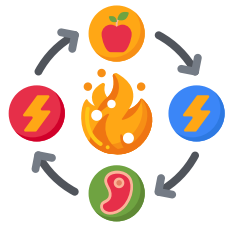
Anabolism and catabolism are two metabolic phases. Anabolism refers to the process which builds molecules the body needs. This requires energy.

Catabolism refers to the process that breaks down complex molecules into smaller ones. This phases releases energy.

Simply put, something that is anabolic builds up and something that is catabolic breaks down.



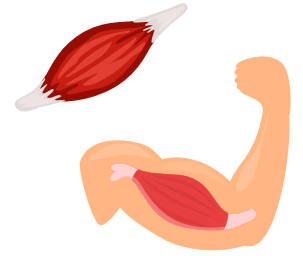
Phases of Metabolism



Elite Personal Training and Fitness Solutions does not provide medical treatment or intervention. We acknowledge scientific evidence that appropriately intensive exercise and sustainable nutritional intervention can have significant impact on chronic health disorders and obesity, dramatically improving symptoms when recommendations are followed. Please visit us at Eliteptf.com for more information and to schedule your evaluation.

Is Exercise Anabolic or Catabolic?

If you had to guess if exercise is anabolic or catabolic, how would you answer? It's quite misleading because we think of exercise as "building up our muscles". Yes, exercise is the ultimate muscle builder, but that is the long-term effect. The immediate effect of exercise both during and immediately after, is quite catabolic - meaning it "beats up" our metabolism.



Intense exercise sessions are catabolic. They deplete our glycogen energy stores, muscle cells, mitochondria [energy producing molecules], immune system and create mild hormonal dysregulation. This is why we typically feel tired or "wiped out" after an intense bout of exercise. This is also why approximately three quarters of marathon runners come down with an upper respiratory infection the day after a marathon.

So technically, while we are training, we are not "building up" [anabolic] we are actually "tearing down" [catabolic]. Of course, the long-term effect of proper exercise, rest and nutrition results is wonderfully anabolic and produces bigger and stronger muscles, reduced body fat, improved flexibility and a whole host of other desirable benefits.



What should we do when we aren't training? The answer is REST. Our bodies need rest so the anabolic processes of restoring the immune system, muscle cells, mitochondria, glycogen stores can be replenished and increased.

What Are the Benefits of Rest Days?

Rest days are critical for everyone from older individuals to elite athletes. There are both physiological and psychological benefits.

Getting adequate rest is necessary to:

- **Promote Muscle Recovery.**

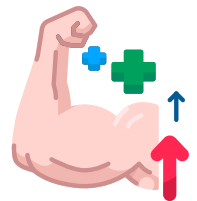
Exercise depletes the body's energy stores and causes tissue breakdown. Rest intervals allow the body to replenish energy stores and repair damaged tissues. Without adequate rest progress and performance will be compromised.

- **Replenish the Immune System.**

Our body takes a beating with intense exercise. In fact, there are some studies that indicate one of the most common times to "come down with a cold" is after intense exercise. The rest interval allows our body to replenish the immune system and in the long term make it stronger.



The Importance of Rest



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- **Prevent Overtraining.**

Too little rest and too few recovery days can lead to overtraining syndrome. This condition is thought to affect nearly 60% of elite athletes and 30% of the rest of us. If we overtrain without adequate rest, we will experience diminished gains, increased risk of injury, fatigue and irritability. If it persists, the increased stress can increase body fat, raise the risk of dehydration, decrease appetite, worsen mood, and decreased sex drive and function.



Rest days are the antidote for this undesirable outcome from overtraining!

- **Promote Relaxation.**

Rest days give your mind and body a break. Rest days also help to create balance in your life by not having to overly devote time to training. Most of us have very little free time. When it's consumed with training on a daily basis, this creates an unsustainable scenario where we have too little time to spend with loved one or other enjoyable activities.

What Is Short-Term Recovery?

Short-term recovery occurs in the hours immediately following intense exercise. It involves consuming the right foods and drinks to immediately minimize the catabolic effect of exercise and to begin the anabolic process of replenishing glycogen and optimizing protein synthesis required to build muscle.



The post-workout nutritional component is enormously important. I will address that in a future newsletter.

What To Do on a Rest Day

There are two types of recovery you can do on a rest day: passive recovery or active recovery. Passive recovery involves taking the day entirely off from exercise. Active recovery is when you engage in low-intensity exercise, placing minimal stress on the body.



As you might imagine, EPT's recommendations regarding passive versus active recovery are individually based. When making any training plan, we always factor in age, physiology, nutritional status, current progress, goals, sleep patterns, personality and lifestyle.

Passive recovery is an intentional day of rest in which you are not doing any form of planned exercise. It's great for the body and allows you to enjoy other activities. For many people, it is great mentally to simply have a break from training.

TAKE A BREAK

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For some personalities and lifestyles active recovery is desirable. During active recovery, the body works to repair soft tissue and improve blood circulation. Increased blood flow can help remove waste products for muscle breakdown and bring nutrients that help repair and rebuild muscles.



Examples of active recovery include walking, stretching and yoga.



Training at EPT

Exercise science and prescription are complex. If that were not the case, everybody who googled a few exercises would be in great shape! Our goal is to maximize your safety and progress. This includes providing expert individualized training [catabolic] and monitoring your rest intervals [anabolic].



Rest Day Takeaways

1. Exercise is a perfect example of a case where more is not better.
2. The long-term effect of intense exercise with proper nutrition and rest is highly anabolic—building our body up to make it stronger and healthier.
3. The short-term effect of intensive exercise is catabolic and breaks down the body.
4. Rest is needed to allow our body to begin the growth (anabolic) phase.
5. Rest days are important both physically and mentally.

Conclusion

Proper exercise is complex and should be prescribed and monitored. That's where EPT comes in. For example, there are times where training on successive days is appropriate based on exercise design, with different body parts being trained on different days. Leave those decisions to our expert staff. Meanwhile, train hard and enjoy your rest!

