



# Over Training Breaking the Camel's Back

Many athletes feel as if they are superior-humans in their training routines. They push harder, harder and harder, as if they possess some God-given immunity to injury. Training subjects the body to physiological stress: the deliberate controlled breakdown of tissue that results in adaption or remodeling and healing at a higher level of capability.

If you work too hard or too long, you will injure yourself by breaking down body tissue. Many athletes subscribe to the no-pain, no-gain philosophy. They attempt to push their bodies and try to run through pain, when instead, they should monitor the pain, push it to its threshold and then back off. If the training session starts off with a small amount of pain and it diminishes throughout the work out, that is okay, but if pain intensity does not abate or increases, then stop, if you don't, you may end up with an injury. Most of these are minor strains, sprains and cases of tendonitis, but if left untreated, they may quickly progress to major problems. Since we all know that one of the goals of training is to minimize down time and maximize up time, logic would suggest that the quicker you respond to aches, pains, strains and pulls, the better your chances are for early recovery.

I suggest training at a hard/easy system. Every time you exercise you break down muscle. We see this under the microscope, with bleeding, disruption of muscle fibers, swelling and inflammation. It takes 48hrs for a muscle to heal; therefore, we base our training on a 48hr recovery period. This is done by alternating hard and easy workouts. You can break this rule once, twice or maybe three times, but if you continue to do so you will end up with a serious injury.

When setting your goals for a major event, such as the River Run, it is extremely easy to over train. Some of the symptoms of over training are as follows:

1. A scratchy, sore throat upon waking in the morning
2. An increase in the awakening pulse of more than 10 beats per minute over previous levels.
3. Irritability
4. Legs that feel like lead
5. An increase in the amount of sleep that is required
6. Insomnia or inability to fall asleep
7. Diffuse joint and muscle pain
8. Hives or rash
9. Nausea
10. A persistent head cold with stuffy or runny nose

There are no benefits to over training; it leads only to staleness, poor performance, and overuse injury. These symptoms should alert you that injury is underway. Don't exceed it, decrease the intensity, duration and frequency of your workouts, or just simply take some time off and relax for three or four days.

Remember, you cannot improve your performance if you cannot train. A good way to avoid overtraining is to incorporate rest into your training program. Build rest into your schedule before it becomes the only choice and you are forced into taking a long vacation from training.