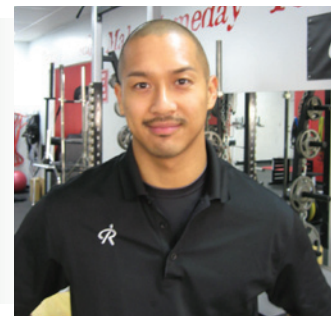


Recovery

Top 5 ways to get the *most* out of your workouts

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There are some days where dragging yourself out of bed or the couch to get primed for a tough workout is seemingly harder than the actual workout, but when you persevere and get through it, it's always worth the effort. However, working hard and training on a regular basis is only half the battle my friends! How can we maximize the results of each and every workout? The key concept that I want to drive home today is that continual progress, positive results, and long term success is just as much about recovery as it is about pushing the envelope.

Keep in mind that when we workout, we are for all intents and purposes placing large amounts of stress to our cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems to the point of causing 'damage,' so to speak. It is that stress and micro damage that invokes the human body's amazing ability to start the rebuilding process. So let's look at the top 5 ways you can maximize your workouts and kick start the recovery process:



- **Post-workout nutrition** – Following a grueling workout, your body has used up its glycogen stores for energy, your muscles have been placed under a great amount of stress and are 'damaged', and your hair has probably seen better days. With that said, typically you have an ideal recovery window that lasts for about 45 minutes post-workout. Your best bet to starting that rebuilding process is typically a post-workout protein shake containing a high quality protein supplement in conjunction with a simple carbohydrate source such as fruit and a healthy fat such as peanut butter or flax seed. Unfortunately, a solid protein shake can't do much for your hair do.
- **Rehydration** – If you were pushing yourself and working intensely, you probably worked up a pretty good sweat. You can blame your messy hair on it. A mere 1-2% loss of body weight through fluid loss would already categorize someone as being dehydrated and negatively affect an individual's mental and physical performance, not to mention their body's ability to transport nutrients and oxygen to our cells. Remember thirst is

already a red flag from your body that you are already dehydrated so be sure to drink water even if you don't feel thirsty.

- **Sleep** – Counting sheep not only boosts your arithmetic skills but getting an optimal 7-9 hours of sleep a night also has countless benefits. Among them, some of the huge benefits optimal sleep provides include; reduced inflammation, hormone regulation, and lowered risks for cardiovascular disease & stress. While sleeping, our body is at rest which provides the perfect environment for all these crucial biological processes to occur with minimal energy demands. Did I mention that achieving optimal sleep has been proven to boost brain functioning and increase an individual's life span? Just thought I throw in those little tidbits.
- **Proper Supplementation** – With so many supplements on the market, there are a handful over time that have shown to be beneficial and well worth making a part of your daily regimen. A complete multi-vitamin provides a wealth of essential vitamins & minerals required to keep the body's natural processes running at an optimal level. Although there is never a substitution for eating wholesome natural healthy food, a multi-vitamin provides an easy and efficient solution. For example, the benefits of fish oil supplementation are overwhelming and beg to ask the question, why isn't everyone taking them? Fish oil's primary benefits are a result of their high omega 3 fatty acid content. Taking fish oil provides incredible benefits including; reduced inflammation, lower cholesterol and triglycerides, improved joint health, efficient fat loss, and reduced muscle soreness from weight training! You should be taking a few fish oil pills right now after reading that...I'll wait.
- **Lifestyle** – Last and certainly not least is living a healthy lifestyle, not only by putting in work at the gym or outside at the park, but on a daily basis in the choices you make, the foods you eat and more importantly don't eat, and keeping your actions focused on doing what's best for your health and wellness. How do you get the most out of your workouts? By committing to them on a regular weekly basis! How do you enhance those results to get the most bang for your buck? By following these steps to optimize that crucial recovery period so we can keep coming back strong day after day and attack our workouts with intensity and passion.

If you're not already following some, if not all of these tips, get started now and reap the benefits of getting the most out of your workouts each and every time!

Charles Chattong is a fitness coach at Results Fitness in Santa Clarita, California. He is certified through the National Strength and Conditioning Association as well as holding a Masters degree in kinesiology. Charles has worked with a wide spectrum of clientele from high school/collegiate athletes to general population. Charles' hair never is a mess after working out...Just saying. For more information about Results Fitness visit their website, www.results-fitness.com, voted by Men's Health Magazine as one of the top ten gyms in America.

