



Triathlon Training Tips from your coaches at This Is Healthful

Ben Leber, Manager of Physical Activity (ben@thisishealthful.ca)

Strength Training

- Try adding plyometrics to your workouts. By improving your leg power, you will increase your stride length which ultimately leads to less strides needed to complete the same distance! More power also leads to stronger cycling and swimming. Consider adding jump squats, scissor jumps and single leg bounds to increase the power!
- Often triathletes have muscle imbalances in their legs with stronger quads and weaker glutes/hamstrings. Add single leg deadlifts, Bulgarian split squats and monster walk with band to your strength training program to minimize the imbalance, improve performance and reduce the risk of future injury!

Endurance Training

- Interval training does not always need to be 0 to 100%. Try lower moderate intensity intervals to stress your aerobic base and improve your fat burning efficiency! This will help reduce the risk of hitting the wall and allow you to perform at higher intensities for longer duration! Consider adding a day alternating between your slow pace and tempo pace.
- Swimming is often the most challenging part of a triathlon. To improve your endurance and efficiency, practice your breathing on both sides. That way, no matter where other athletes are or which direction the waves are coming from, you will be able to get sufficient air to help keep you going!

Maximizing Mobility

- Be efficient with your mobility work and schedule it for *before* and *after* your training. Use a combination of a dynamic warm up and warm down to keep things short and sweet using targeted soft tissue release (tune-up balls or foam roller), dynamic stretching and foundational movement patterns (squat, lunge, etc.). Everything should take you no longer than about 5-7 minutes.

Scott Hamlin, Coord. of Physiotherapy Services (scott@thisishealthful.ca)

Preventing/Treating Injuries

- The key is to maintain the health of your body's main stabilizers through cross training and consistency - at least 2-3 times a week. The cross training should be a combination of addressing strength, endurance imbalances and movement restrictions. The important areas include but are not limited to: the feet/ankles, hips, core / abdominals, thoracic spine and shoulder girdle. It may seem like a lot, however, you can break it up into regions (e.g. upper and lower body parts, trunk) and do them on different days to make the time spent enjoyable.





Heather Vrbanac, Manager of Mental Hygiene (heather@thisishealthful.ca)

Mental Sport Performance Training

- Dr. Samuele Marcora states that “our mind dictates our physical limits”. Perception of effort can be manipulated with the use of three mental skills:
 - Goal setting – having a specific goal in mind and a plan to achieve them is key when an athlete takes on a challenging endurance task
 - Motivation – maximum effort an athlete is willing to exert to satisfy a goal. Stronger motivation leads to a greater capacity for pain tolerance
 - Self-Talk - The way an athlete talks to him/herself while performing can mediate their interpretation of incoming signals from the body, which in turn, can alter their experience of pain. Self-talk is a simple and efficient method for athletes to reconnect with goals and motivation during endurance tasks.
- It is important for endurance athletes to be aware of the potential power their mind has to decrease the perception of effort, consequently increasing pain tolerance. Use these tips to optimally engage your mind and support your performance before and during your grueling races!

Lauren Wills, Manager of Essential Eating (lauren@thisishealthful.ca)

Nutritional Needs

- It is important to have a sufficient carbohydrate intake to refuel glycogen stores and assist in recovery. When training heavily for a triathlon, aim for a daily carbohydrate intake of 7-10g per Kg of body weight per day. When training decreases to a low/moderate intensity you can reduce your daily carbohydrate intake to 5-7g/kg per day.
- Carbohydrate intake immediately after training will impact the speed that your body will be able to recover and refuel for your next session. Aim to consume 1g of carbohydrate per kilogram of body weight, every hour, for 2-4 hours after training (depending on intensity). Good sources of carbohydrates include: fruit, brown rice, sweet potato, yogurt, sport recovery drinks, and pasta.
- Recent sport nutrition studies have indicated that the ‘sweet spot’ for daily protein intake is likely around 1.6g/kg of bodyweight. Protein in excess of this amount will likely not yield any additional strengthening or recovery benefits.

