

R'nR:

Why it's important to take a break

The Cape Epic 2014 is behind us and congratulations to all of you awesome riders out there who took part! By now you might be experiencing the post Epic blues and it's time to enjoy some good rest and relaxation. Here are some warning signs to watch out for and signs that you're in need to take a break from the bike, courtesy of the Full Sus Physio, **Sarah Walker**.

After a lot of training and many days of racing, are you experiencing any of the following?

- ◆ Stiff sore muscles
- ◆ No power and slow, heavy legs
- ◆ Lack of motivation and feeling irritable
- ◆ Loss of confidence and self-esteem...

You may be in need of some R'nR and here is why your body needs a break. After an intense training session or a race, the following systems in your body are stressed:

Muscle system micro-trauma:

Muscle cells have been damaged and need to repair and rebuild.

Nervous system fatigue:

High intensity explosive or endurance exercise puts pressure on your neural pathways to fire in the correct sequence at the correct speed.

Energy depletion:

The body's energy system has been stressed and needs to be refuelled.

Mental fatigue:

This may set in, particularly after a competitive race lasting a few days.

Travel fatigue:

If you have travelled to train or compete, factors such as change in time zones / altitude / climate / disrupted sleep and meal times will all add to the body's stress.


Rest helps these systems to recover and adapt to the stresses they are or were exposed to. One can then train with less fatigue and your body now has the capacity to perform better and adapt to new workloads faster. Rest also lowers the risk of falling sick, developing an injury or reaching burnout. Doesn't R'nR sound more and more appealing?

If the idea of rest from your bike tips you into a state of depression though, here are ways and means of recovering faster:

Seek guidance from a Nutritionist on how to fuel and refuel your body

around race time and recovery time. Massage your muscles to promote blood flow in localised areas, relax the muscles, and also improve your mood and well-being. Perform static stretching for 10 minutes in a pool after exercise as this aids recovery of the muscles. Make use of the contrast bath technique: have a 3 minute long hot shower, followed by a 1 minute ice cold bath. Repeat three times. This also aids blood flow and muscle recovery. And sleep, but not too much – 7 to 9 hours for adults is perfect.

Remember!

The basic rule of thumb is one rest day per week during training, and post-race is one rest day per day of racing. Make sure recovery time is part of your training and race programme to avoid fatigue and sub optimal performance on your bike. 



Sarah Walker is a sports physiotherapist who has been involved with treating cyclists for 15 years. She's worked at many MTB stage races around the country and from her Cape Town practice sees many a sports person. She teaches Pilates and is a fitness trainer for tennis academy. Sarah believes that a thorough sports specific assessment followed by a well-planned exercise programme to treat the cause of the problem is the key to getting her patients back to full health and sporting success. Go to www.walkerphysiotherapy.co.za for more info or send your questions to sarah@walkerphysiotherapy.co.za

How you can really boost your immune system?

Our immune system is a strong army fighting against a battalion of disease-causing micro-organisms. But sometimes the warriors slip up and an invader gets through. Is it possible to try to help and make our warriors stronger? What factors will assist? Read **Rochez O' Grady's** Nutrition Column to find out how to boost your immune system.

Prevention is better than cure

We would all love to boost our immune system, but in reality it has been proven difficult since the body's army is a system, and the warriors do not act on their own. To fight at their best, it requires balance and harmony.

Your first line of defence is a healthy lifestyle; this is the best step in keeping your immune system strong.

Get into healthy habits like:

- ◆ Don't smoke.
- ◆ Eat a diet high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and low in saturated fat.
- ◆ Exercise regularly.
- ◆ Make sure you drink enough water, at least 8 glasses a day.
- ◆ Cut out refined sugar, and refined starch.
- ◆ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ◆ Control your blood pressure.
- ◆ If you drink alcohol, drink only in

moderation.

- ◆ Get adequate sleep.
- ◆ Take steps to avoid infection, such as washing your hands frequently and cooking meats thoroughly.
- ◆ Get regular medical screening tests for people in your age group and risk category.

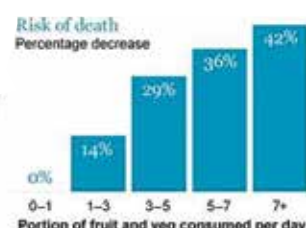
Eating right

And what about what we put into our mouths? Like all armies, our fighting warriors need healthy nourishment. This requires a balanced micronutrient intake.

How do we know if we are getting this balance? There is no concrete answer to this question, which means we need to ensure we are doing everything we can to reach our

Food for thought

How different foods increase or decrease risk of premature death
Based on one portion per day



optimum micronutrient intake. Firstly, get enough micronutrients from your diet. The old recommendation of five servings a day of fruit and vegetables is no longer good enough. We need to start aiming for at least 10 portions of vegetables a day, and one to two servings of fruit per day. Increasing to this amount could reduce your risk of premature death by up to 42%. Try to fill at least half of your plate at lunch and dinner with salad and/or vegetables, and to include one to two servings as a snack between main meals.

Once you have increased your micronutrient intake by eating more greens, yellows, reds and purples, you can also take a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement, rather than mega doses of single vitamins. Your urine may become more yellow in colour as your body gets rid of any excess, but at least you will know you are meeting your optimal nutrition requirements. This means that you are ensuring all you can to promote prevention rather than cure. Remember a multivitamin needs to be taken daily, after a main meal, preferably in the morning.

Next, make sure the environment of your body stays healthy. A great way to do this is to put back the 'good' bacteria, probiotics, into our stomachs. It is now known that certain bacteria in the gut influence the strength of our army. It can help correct deficiencies and increase certain front line soldiers. Taking a probiotic daily helps to create a peaceful environment for your army.

In the end the benefit of doing these simple things will make a great impact not only on your warriors protecting you against disease, but it will also make you feel energised and help all systems of the body function at their best. **FS**



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(pronounced r-OH-shay)
is a registered Dietitian and runs her own practice called MunchWize. She focuses on educating and motivating her clients in practical ways to follow a healthy lifestyle and achieve personal health goals. You can find out more about MunchWize at www.munchwize.co.za or ask Rochez your nutrition related questions at rochez@munchwize.co.za.

Lord of the Trails – A Hogsback adventure

Anybody who has visited the Drakensberg will know that the Berg is not exactly the same as the majestic mountains we have in the Western Cape, but the Berg is a close second in **Jeanne-Louise Wiese's** books. So follow her advice and when passing through the Eastern Cape take the scenic route through the mountains and detour to the little town of Hogsback.

Funny enough, the name has nothing to do with hogs. Some say that it's because one of the three peaks that overlook the village resembles a Hog's Back, which is a geological term describing that particular rock formation. In Xhosa, the surrounding area is called Qabimbola, after the red clay which they used to paint their faces.

The town's history reaches back to 1848 when Thomas Baines passed through it on his travels through South Africa. One of the first inhabitants was Thomas Summerton, a gardener from Oxford, who attempted to re-create the English countryside at Hogsback. Today you can see this legacy throughout the town with apple orchards, hazelnut avenues and flowering gardens scattered across the landscape. Forestry activities started in 1883 and the Hogsback pass was opened in 1932. It is still the only tar road accessing the town. There are a few gravel roads around the area that lead to the town, all of which can be explored on a mountain bike but should not be attempted with a small vehicle.

If you really want to experience the beauty of this place, you have to head into the single tracks which lead through the forests, up the mountains, past the numerous waterfalls and up to some spectacular views. There is a 22km Green Madonna Loop, a Blue route, the Tor Doone route and many more options. All information regarding the MTB trails can be obtained from the tourist office in town.

The Amatola Mountains and Amatola Forest in the Hogsback area are often claimed as being the sources of inspiration for J.R.R Tolkien's epic *The Lord of the Rings*. You can clearly see why when you trek through the secretive forests. It doesn't take much to imagine how fairies, trolls, elves and wizards could make their home there. After some challenging climbs, when looking down from the mountains onto the fertile plains of the Tyume Valley, one can see the patches of indigenous forest where a rich variety of birdlife thrives, including wailing cisticola, African pipit, reed cormorant, red-billed duck, loerie and parrot.

These forests are scattered with spectacular waterfalls like the Madonna and Child, Swallowtail and Kettlespout. The Kettlespout waterfall bursts through a natural

spout in the rocks and, during windy conditions creates a feathery plume some 9 metres high. The rivers which feed these waterfalls are also mostly stocked with trout and feature crystal clear water, perfect for cooling down after a long and challenging cycling trip around those parts. And if you take some time to quietly sit and wait you might be lucky enough to spot the Cape clawless otter, mongoose, bushbuck, duiker or vervet monkeys.

A word of caution though, when planning a cycling trip in the winter, it is important to remember that these mountains do get a lot of snow, swirling mists and frightening thunderstorms. Which for most adventure seekers would mean an additional thrill and more reasons to visit. Just dress for cold weather. If you need a local contact to help plan your trip, give Cycle Roots a call on 073 567 9487 or drop by the shop

"THOMAS SUMMERTON ATTEMPTED TO RE-CREATE THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE AT HOGSBACK."



Enjoying the pristine Hogsback forest

CYCLE ROOTS



Jeanne-Louise Wiese is a Senior Environmental Practitioner for engineering, management and specialist technical services giant Aurecon. As an avid MTBer she has the good fortune of consulting on the Provincial Department of Transport to upgrade and maintenance programme for gravel roads, so she gets to visit secluded areas and take her bike along.

in the Hogsback Main Road. The owner, Neels du Toit, set up many of the single tracks around town, so he's the best possible source of local riding knowledge.

The area is unspoilt and the locals would prefer to keep it that way. So please take care not to litter, stick to the marked trails and leave only tread tracks when riding out in the forests of the enigmatic town of Hogsback. **FS**