

GETTING SICK: WHAT SHOULD AN ATHLETE DO?



MPG

OPTIMISE
EVERY
WORKOUT

By Freddy Lampret



One of the most difficult situations an athlete will encounter, is when illness strikes. It is complicated further if an important race is imminent.

Dealing with these situations correctly is essential for the health and long term well-being of all athletes, because it is not a matter of if you get sick, it is a question of when.

● How do I know when I am sick?

The first step is making the decision of whether you are sick, possibly in the process of getting sick, or simply tired from training. One rule of thumb is “when in doubt, rest”. I find that for many athletes this is not very good advice because every week of training will present its physical challenges and there will often be a lot of doubt. Most weeks of training will include a day or two where the body feels sub-par.

● Under the following conditions, you should do no training at all:

1. If you have fever, regardless how slight it may be.
2. If you have body aches and weakness or you are experiencing a general “unwell” feeling.
3. If you have a productive cough (coughing up chunks of phlegm).
4. If you have a sore throat and it is painful to swallow food.
5. If you are experiencing a bout of diarrhoea or you have been vomiting in the past 24 hours.
6. If you are experiencing dizziness, nausea or have chest pain.

Under these conditions training is ill-advised and can seriously compromise your health. It would be wise to visit the doctor.

Take the time off, and try get sufficient rest so that your body can fight off the illness and you can slowly regain your strength.

● Under the following conditions, caution should be taken.

Training should be kept short and easy, regardless of what the training program says:

1. You are in the first 72 hours after having had a fever, or having had gastric issues such as vomiting or diarrhoea.
2. You have a “scratchy” throat, which is not painful at all when you swallow food.
3. You have a headache, or head cold.
4. You have suffered a bout of insomnia and have not slept.
5. You feel generally well, but you feel that you might be starting to get sick. In this case, one easy day of training is appropriate

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Take the time off, and try get sufficient rest so that your body can fight off the illness and you can slowly regain your strength.

● Under the following conditions you can continue training as normal:

1. If you have upper respiratory congestion which is allergy related, clears up during exercise and is under control.
2. Your body is tired from training.
3. You have DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness), related to resistance/plyometric training.
4. You don't feel like training.

Training is tough and it needs to be somewhat challenging in order that your body builds the appropriate adaptations to render it more resistant to fatigue. Fatigue resistance can only be achieved if the body is made to be fatigued. There needs to be a stimulus for the body to adapt to.

Don't let a reasonable amount of fatigue be a reason to remove the stimulus altogether.

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Freddy Lampret | Pro Athlete/Coach



Freddy Lampret holds 2 B.Sc. Degrees:
1) B.Sc (Biochemistry & Genetics), University of Witwatersrand 2000
2) B.Sc.Hons (Physiotherapy), University of Witwatersrand 2005

Freddy Lampret has been running competitively since the age of 8, where he won his first provincial Cross Country Title. While at school he competed in middle distance on the track; at 400m, 800m and 1500m distances.

After leaving school, Freddy became involved in Triathlon and has since competed in over 20 Ironman events and over 50 Ironman 70.3 events often finishing in top 10.

He has qualified for the Ironman 70.3 World Championships as a Professional. He won the 2012 South African Long Course Triathlon Championship and is a 3time consecutive winner of the Afriman Ultra Duathlon.

Freddy has won acclaim as a coach in the following areas: In addition to his education and athletic achievements, Freddy has also coached numerous athletes to national championship titles including amateurs and professionals. He has coached swimming for the past 15 years and has run a successful masters/triathletes swim program for the past 12 years.

He has coached in excess of 150 people in completing their first Ironman, and hundreds more to their personal best performances over various distances and race formats.

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