



# Overtraining 101

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I would like to pass along some information on overtraining (OT). I am presenting this information to you with the intent that if overtraining occurs, to you or your team mates, you will recognize the symptoms and seek assistance from your coach and/or your athletic trainers.

Overtraining occurs when you are exposed to prolonged physical stress with little to no recovery time. Exercise and physical activity take a tremendous toll on your body. Exercise damages muscle tissue and depletes metabolic fuel stores. You must have recovery time to allow the muscles to heal and your fuel systems to replenish.

From the phenomena of taxing our bodies and then recovering comes an adaptation response. We must be exposed to physical stress in order to better our performance abilities. Although stress is important, recovery is vital. We must be exposed to periods of minimal physical stress to allow our bodies to adapt to period of high physical stress. If the recovery time is not adequate, adaptation does not occur, breakdown occurs.

Life stress also affects your predisposition to develop OT. Researchers have found that an athlete's perception of the stressors in their life, outside of sport, will add to the stress imposed from physical training. Here are some examples of life stressors that a college student may encounter:

1. Issues with personal relationships
2. Money problems/ job problems
3. Maintaining a social life/ peer pressures
4. Academic performance pressures
5. Loss of a loved one/ significant loss

Other stressors that may impose on athletes that are sport related are:

1. Pressure to perform at high levels all to the time
2. Pressure to never make mistakes during competitive situations
3. Punishment for poor performance
4. Being compared to other athletes

5. Having your identity hinge on being a talented athlete
6. Focusing on outcomes (winning, being better than others)

Here are some symptoms of overtraining. Please note that many of these symptoms are similar to when you become sick. Therefore, it is essential to talk to your athletic training staff to determine where these symptoms are coming from.

1. Your body is tired, yet you cannot get a good night sleep.
2. Your appetite is diminished
3. You experience frequent tension headaches
4. There have been dramatic changes in your weight.
5. You are moody and irritable
6. You have trouble focusing on tasks in school and sport situations
7. You are not longer motivated to participate in your sport.

Understand that overtraining does not come on all of a sudden. Rather, OT builds up slowly. The symptoms may be subtle at first, and before you know it they will accumulate and impair your performance. You must learn to recognize the signs of overtraining early to prevent the problem from becoming out of control.

If you suspect that you might be suffering from the symptoms of OT come in and speak with a member of the Athletic Training/Sports Medicine staff. The Athletic Training/Sports Medicine staff will always have our doors open to our athletes. We will approach any problem that is concerning you with care, respect, and your well being at the fore front of our intent. We will work with you to assess and treat issues, like overtraining, so that you may get the most out of your athletic experience here at BSC.

# Train Hard . . . and Smart!