

NAPPING FOR ELITE ATHLETES

Sufficient sleep is essential for athletic performance, recovery, and well being. Daytime napping is a tool elite athletes use to increase total sleep time, adjust to new time zones during travel, improve mood, and reduce susceptibility to illness. According to recent research, whether you have lost sleep the night before or not, a daytime nap can also improve cognitive and physical performance and reduce perceived fatigue. (Mesas et al., 2023).

BENEFITS OF DAYTIME NAPPING



STRESS REDUCTION



MUSCLE REPAIR



ILLNESS PREVENTION



COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE
(Alertness, Reaction Time, Attention)



PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE
(Strength, Endurance, Speed)



IMPROVED MOOD



DECREASED FATIGUE

NAPPING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Typical recommendations for napping duration range from 20–90 mins. Research suggests that longer naps (>35 mins) may be more beneficial for cognitive and physical performance.
- Wake up from your nap no later than 4 p.m. and at least an hour before you start training or warming up to avoid impact of grogginess on performance.
- If you feel groggy after napping, bright light, physical activity, and caffeine can help.
- Use naps as needed to help you adjust to new time zones when traveling. Be sure not to nap too long (<90 mins) or too late (wake up before 4 p.m.).
- Try napping if your sleep is disrupted leading up to competition/travel. It can help your immune system and prevent illness.
- Know what works for you. If you are not a napper, you can still get all of the above benefits from nighttime sleep.

