

Finish What You Started in Your Spinning® Journey

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The heart rate is elevated. The blood is pumping powerfully to the muscles. Your Spinning participants are maximizing their training session as they crank out their final pedal strokes in their target Energy Zone™. Now what? Do they quickly bring the pedals to a stop, hop off the Spinner® and hurry out of the studio? Of course not. It's time to prepare for the recovery and restoration that is about to come.

Your students need to ease out of the journey just as they eased into it. Although the cool-down is neglected by some participants, missing the cool down will slow the healing process needed for improvements in future performance. So, don't jump off the Spinner® just yet, as it is time to transition the body back to a refreshed state first. If this down time is eliminated, the student will experience many symptoms of an improper recovery.

Your Spinning journey is similar to reading a book. Everyone knows how frustrating it is to leave a book unfinished. Those last few pages wrap up the story, making the whole experience worthwhile and encouraging you to start anew.

The cool-down completes the Spinning journey by gently bringing the heart rate down to nearly as low as it was when you started the training session. Although there are many physical benefits, it is also imperative to focus on the mind, so participants leave feeling successful and excited to train again. Stretching should be incorporated to help muscles relax after they have been working hard. When you absorb the three components of the cool-down, your body sucks up the benefits.

The cool down is simply a warm up in reverse. By gradually bringing your heart rate down to near normal, the flow of blood is redirected away from the active muscles and back to the organs and brain. This transition from an active state into a more idle one prevents blood pooling, a rapid drop in blood pressure, lightheadedness, dizziness, muscle spasms, cramping, muscle soreness, and injuries. This successful ending initiates the beginning of the recovery process.

Physiology

Taking a more detailed look at physiology, your body shunts blood to the working muscles. The arteries are responsible for sending oxygen-rich blood from your heart to the dynamic muscles. Their strong muscular walls contract and thrust the blood quickly to the muscle cells. The blood subsequently picks up the waste and carries it away through the veins. This depleted blood is in an oxygen-deficit state and carries the build up of toxic lactic acid and carbon dioxide, to be expelled. The veins, unlike the arteries, do not have the same ability to contract. Instead, they swell when filled with blood and narrow to squeeze the spent blood out. The veins need extra time for this process. With this in mind, you need to spend quality time cooling down to prevent blood from pooling in veins. The effective way is to simulate the same movement and gently pump it out.





Overall, if you stop exercising suddenly, the blood pools in veins and not enough blood returns to the heart to be re-oxygenated and transported by the arteries. The brain sends an emergency signal to the heart to make an effort to increase the blood flow; however there is a rapid decrease in heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature. This stressful plummet results in a shortage of blood sent to the head and organs, the basis for dizziness, light-headedness, fainting, nausea, and vomiting. It is important to realize that if your students are new, out of shape, or at risk for heart disease, blood pooling can place additional undue stress on their heart.

Additionally, easing out of the training session boosts the removal of lactate from the blood and muscles. Lactic acid hinders the action of the muscles and slows your rate of recovery. If you do not rid the muscles of the lactate, you may experience fatigue, delayed muscle soreness and injury. To boot, during your training session, adrenaline and endorphins are released. It is important to gradually bring the levels of these hormones back to normal. Without a proper cool-down, high levels can cause a feeling of agitation, insomnia, and disturbed sleep patterns.

Psychology

The cool-down is a great opportunity for students to assess their training session. What were the highlights of their performance? What goals did they achieve? Even if parts of the session did not go as well as planned, they should be aware of their challenges and determine what they will do differently next time. This will also give them the chance to deal with their frustrations now, instead of bringing their stresses to work or home.

Determination and desire to improve their weaknesses will keep them motivated and ready to engage in their next session. Congratulate your students on their successes and persistence to pursue their potential. Create affirmations to encourage positive mental images of their ride after they leave the studio. Have them concentrate on the good in their training and lifestyle so they leave feeling balanced, happy, and healthy. Deep breathing exercises will encourage the body to transition back to a relaxed state. Diaphragmatic breathing will assist in lowering the heart rate. Take advantage of a heart rate monitor to accurately obtain your target cool down heart rate. Powerful exhales will influence the removal of carbon dioxide. A calm breathing pattern creates a more relaxed and fluid pedal stroke, which can also assist in additional delivery of oxygen to promote recovery. When gradually reducing resistance, this fluid pedal stroke will aid in the removal of toxic by-products.

Benefits

- Reduced tightness (so muscles are more flexible and less tense)
- Prevention of delayed onset muscle soreness
- Breathing rate returns to normal
- Reduced heart rate



- Blood pressure returns to normal
- Removal of waste products (including lactic acid)
- Reduced stress on your cardiovascular system
- Relaxation of the leg muscles
- Muscle repair
- Return of blood to heart, brain, and organs
- Injury prevention
- Feeling of energy rather than sluggishness
- Body adjusts to a calmer state
- Assists in rest and sleep after exercise
- Encourages a positive attitude toward exercise
- You look forward to the next training session!

Guidelines

It takes approximately three minutes for your body to signal that it is not necessary to pump extra blood to your muscles. With this in mind, spend at least five minutes to cool down. Allow more time for new students, special populations and after high intensity training sessions.

Ask students to begin to back off of intensity, and decrease resistance on the flywheel. When students reach 50-65% MHR, ask them to pedal the body and mind into a post training state. Still releasing resistance, each stroke becomes slower than the last. As you dial down to “no resistance” zone, give your legs permission to stop pedaling. Let the pedals gently carry you on their own, until they come to a stop. Because the muscle tissue temperature is warm, it is an ideal time to stretch. Stretching will improve your flexibility, decrease muscle soreness, lengthen the muscles, and help you relax. Stretch the muscles you just used by holding each stretch for 20-30 seconds.

To achieve complete balance during the Spinning® journey, it is essential to finish what you started. The proper cool-down is advantageous to increasing performance, protecting against injury & muscle soreness, and guiding the body into recovery mode. The calming work of the cycling’s specific muscle groups actively removes the waste products and triggers the brain to begin recovery. As the heart rate continues to slow down, your body begins to absorb the training session.

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