



SPORTS MASSAGE

You cannot beat a sports massage for injury prevention that you can feel. While not as pleasurable as your typical spa massage, a good sports massage certainly has its moments and it will leave you feeling revived and ready to go again.

For this reason, almost every serious endurance athlete now includes regular massage as part of their recovery and from my own experience a growing number of athletes regardless of age and ability level are as well.

Sports massage enhances recovery and helps prevent injuries in several ways. The most important effect of massage with respect to recovery is that it substantially increases blood circulation to the muscles and keeps it elevated for as long as an hour afterwards.

This extra blood flow flushes metabolic wastes from the muscles, hurries in nutrients that repair muscle damage, and controls inflammation and the pain associated with it.

Massage also alleviates muscular trigger points (areas of sensitivity), mobilizes adhesions and breaks up scar tissue in the muscles, restoring normal function.

Yet another use for massage is identifying injuries before they become painful during exercise, as well as muscle imbalances that could lead to injury and are probably compromising your technique, efficiency and end result.

For this you should search for a massage therapist with a background in orthopedics, rehabilitation and even better, with experience of working with multi-sport athletes!

Sports massage may cost you anything between \$65-\$75 depending on the therapist's background and experience.

If money is no object and you're serious about performance schedule one session per week during the build and peak phases of your training cycles as this is where the higher intensity sessions may start to play havoc with your body's muscles.

Some therapists may do half hour sessions, which will not cost you as much but would still allow a competent therapist to target specific muscle groups within your allotted time.

There are various other self-massage techniques that you could and should practice, if used properly, devices like the foam rollers can yield some of the same benefits as sports massage, however in my own opinion you cannot beat a hands-on sports massage from a therapist to fully enhance the benefits from the points mentioned above.

