

TOSH TIMES

TOSH Baseball Program Newsletter

Official sports medicine and sports performance provider to



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Why it's important to cool down after you practice and play — and how to follow up



By Michael S. Everett

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The weather we've seen during the start of spring baseball season leads to the topic I'll address today: Why it's important to cool down after you practice and play. Snow on April 30 in Utah—and torrential rains at the RMSB March Madness Tournament in Mesquite—adds some literal oomph to a discussion on cooling down.

A Proper Cool Down

In our last newsletter I discussed proper warm-up

techniques, mostly relating to arm care. Today I'd like to encourage parents, coaches, and players to spend just a little more time winding down physically after games and practices for the greater good of your arms and your whole bodies.

Spending 10-15 minutes after moderate to hard practices or games can GREATLY decrease the stresses on your heart, joints, muscles, and tendons. The results are evident but often players—and parents and coaches—just don't take the time. When you understand the benefits to your athlete's potential, there won't be a question if cooling-down exercises are worth the 15 minutes they take. *My main message today:* JUST BUILD THE TIME INTO YOUR REGULAR SCHEDULE.

What to Do

- During games, have bench players jog to the outfield fence and back between innings. That's a great way to keep their systems warm and their minds active.
- After games or practice, a light jog to either rewarm the system if you were briefly out of the game or to cool down your system if you were intensely active will regulate blood flow, lactic acid, and other body systems.
- Some teams choose to run sprints after games or practice for conditioning, so a cool-down jog when you're finished would be ideal before doing some whole-body static stretching.



- Cool-down stretching can prevent or limit muscle soreness.
- Cool-down stretching will improve muscle resting length after games or practices, which enhances proper joint tension and reduces the potential for joint and muscle injury.
- Cool-down stretching should include the major muscles of running and throwing.
- Stretches should be done with good form and held for two sets of 20-60 seconds for best results.

One other note to coaches: One of the most difficult aspects of coaching is holding chalk talks or strategic discussions at proper times—but not so long in the middle of practice or games that players lose the benefit of their warm-up. Holding team talks before warm-up, during team cool-downs and stretching, or after cool-downs is best for your players' systems.

Do You Need Help With Injuries?

My job at TOSH as the baseball and softball program coordinator is only part of what I do each week. I love being a skill-specific instructor of this great game, but I'm also a certified athletic trainer, and in that role I evaluate sports injuries to determine their severity and decide what the next step is to help athletes heal.

That leads to an important reminder for players, parents and coaches: Take injuries seriously and take action promptly if you encounter an injury that may be serious and if you're not sure what to do. Sometimes treating these injuries is as simple as teaching proper warm-up, stretching, and strengthening.

Other times, an athletic trainer's evaluation reveals the need to see a doctor and in very serious cases to see an orthopedic surgeon and face the possibility of surgery. I hate looking in **the** eyes of athletes and their parents and telling them their injuries require them to have surgery or miss the season.

If you or yours are already in pain or already have an injury that needs to be addressed, please don't hesitate to call TOSH at 801-314-4040 to set an appointment for a free injury assessment by myself or one of our great certified athletic trainers. And if you're injury-free, then please follow these tips I've shared to keep it that way!

Michael

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Key Nutrition Tips To Fuel Your Energy and Endurance



By Jenna Ellis

TOSH Sports Dietitian

The playing season is demanding and rigorous, requiring you to recover quickly and be well-rested. Fueling for the long season ahead requires knowledge and planning not only on game day, but also throughout the week.

Proper nutrient timing is key to keeping your energy levels high. Aim to eat about every three hours by splitting your intake into medium-sized meals and small snacks throughout the day. This will help optimize muscle mass and recovery.

Sample Fueling Schedule

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Snack before training (adjust if practice isn't in the afternoon)
- Recovery snack (within 30 minutes of workouts)
- Dinner
- Additional snack



What and how much food you eat before practices and games depends on how much time you have. If you're eating three or four hours before a game, have a well-balanced meal consisting of complex carbohydrates, a moderate amount of lean protein, and a serving of healthy fat. Eating closer to an event is a bit trickier since you have less time for the food to digest. When eating an hour or two before a baseball game, choose foods that are high in easily digestible carbohydrates but low in fat, fiber, and protein—since these nutrients delay digestion. Also, stick to familiar foods—you don't want to throw your stomach a curve ball before a big game!

Pack a **snack pack** to keep yourself well-fueled no matter where you play. Keep these things in mind:

- Weekly: Stock your locker and gym bag with non-perishable snacks to serve as pre- or post-workout snacks.
- Competition day: Bring your favorite pre-competition snack or meal with you.
- Weekend events: Pack a cooler with nutritious food you like to keep you going.

Use this list to help generate ideas of foods you can pack and take with you:

Non-Perishables

- Pretzels
- Cereal
- Trail mix
- Applesauce
- Crackers
- Whole fruit
- Granola bars
- PB and J sandwiches

Perishables (Cooler)

- Greek yogurt
- Cut fruit
- Milk
- Pasta salad
- String cheese
- Deli sandwiches
- Veggies with hummus

Jenna

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