

Recovering From Midseason Injury

Written by Erin Pinder
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The training plan is written, race registration is done, all that's left to do is put in some miles... and get to the starting line healthy. Unfortunately, I see so many keen runners starting off eagerly only to end up injured before toeing the line for their first race of the season. If you happen to find yourself in this situation, it is still possible to have a successful racing season if you take the time to regroup and reevaluate your plan. Going through the process outlined below will get you back on the right track.

- » Find out what went wrong. Sometimes this is as simple as looking back in your training log but a trip to your favorite health care professional is recommended if a diagnosis is not obvious. If you don't know what caused your injury, you won't know what to change when you resume training and will likely end up in the same situation.
- » Find out what you need to do to get healthy. How much time off running will likely be required? Will any treatment be required in addition to rest? What activities can be done that will not delay your return to running? Again, a health care professional who works regularly with runners will be helpful in answering these questions.
- » Maintain fitness throughout your recovery. Try not to use your injury as an excuse to take a break from training. Take a look at the activities that can be done safely while you recover and pick one or two that will maintain your cardio as well as muscular strength and endurance. Pool running and cycling are usually the best options for runners. Write a new training plan that will get you through the injury recovery period. Cross training activities can be gradually reduced as you begin to increase running mileage towards the end of your recovery. Be sure to include any prescribed rehab exercises in your new training program to ensure that they are completed!
- » Revisit your racing goals. Depending on your predicted recovery time, you may need to change early season race goals from specific times to "just to finish". Goals for races later in the season should also be revised in order to be realistic with a shorter training cycle.
- » Be patient and flexible. Guidelines for injury recovery are just that, everyone is going to be different and you need to give your body as much time as it needs. A premature return to running will just set you back longer.



Good luck and happy training!



Erin Pinder is the owner of Runner's Soul in Lethbridge, AB. As a physiotherapist, she has worked with runners to overcome mid-season injuries. Erin also has experience making a comeback from injury herself having completed an Ironman triathlon 7 months after breaking her ankle on a training run.