



Photo: Kecia Liftman

Post-Workout Recovery with the Biomat®

Salina has been a yoga and meditation practitioner for over a decade and has traveled numerous times to India to deepen her study and practice of mindfulness and meditation. She is also a Stress Management Specialist at the Ekahi Ornish Heart Disease Reversal Program. When she is not teaching yoga, you can often find her surfing the waves at her favorite beach or traveling the world.

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For any athlete, taking the necessary steps for recovery can't be overstated. Peak performance shares the same precipice as that of injury. As weekend warriors, gym rats, triathletes, and cross-fitters often suffer the same debilitating injuries: sprains, pulled muscles, and delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS). As with anything we love, it's easy to overdo it. A scenic, beautiful hike that lasts several hours can sideline a person just as easily as an ultra-marathon.

I've been there. For the last several years, I have been an avid yoga practitioner, instructor, and surfer, and have the aches and familiar injuries to prove it. Though I'm just a yogi, the style of yoga I practice, called Ashtanga yoga, is high intensity. It took me years to attain proficiency as an athletic "Ashtangi" as we are called. The frequency and intensity in which I practice and teach Ashtanga yoga lends to a semi-pro status if there were such a thing. I end up spending six days a week "yoga-ing," and each session lasts about an hour and a half. By the peak of my routine, I'm huffing and puffing, and dripping with sweat. If anyone needs recovery from a workout, it's certainly me.

Finding relief with the Biomat® was instantaneous. I use the Professional Biomat® and love the benefits from the far infrared rays generated through the layer of amethyst stones, which are then transferred to the body as heat. These infrared rays and the negative ions emitted from the Biomat® make a big difference in my

experience in recovering from physical exertion. For whatever I put my body through, I noticed quicker healing from strained muscles and everyday soreness using the Biomat®.

Even with a Biomat®, I've learned to stay consistent with the basics of recovery. To really benefit from the use of the Biomat® requires a solid foundation of a couple elements to maintain a healthful physical exercise routine and adequate basic recovery. These include:

1. Adequate, quality sleep
2. Proper nutrition and hydration
3. Workout regularly (sorry weekend warriors)
4. Stretch and do active recovery after workouts
5. Take rest days or vary the intensity through the week

With these fundamental practices in place, you could move into what have been called "bio-hacks" – ways to improve your biology using technology. Every little bit helps. The medical and anecdotal methods for keeping athletes in shape is in constant development and the subject of degrees, conferences, and peer-reviewed documents. Admittedly, what I know comes from my practice as a yoga instructor and water person. Most everyone agrees: modifying the temperature of parts of the body works to improve health and mood. Technology could be defined as a bath of cold water or the Biomat®, which uses infrared heat therapy. There is a reason warm showers; saunas; steam rooms; dips



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in frozen lakes; and onsen (natural hot spring baths) have been around for hundreds of years. It's because they work.

Here is what works for me:

- Ice baths or cold exposure to reduce inflammation
- Infrared sauna or infrared ray therapy with a Biomat® to improve circulation
- Foam rolling to improve muscle tissue quality

The key to all of this is patience. Like athleticism itself, learning to recover is a process. First, build a great foundation of solid recovery strategies. Then, test out these other methods, too.

For example, jump in the cold plunge at the spa or gym (and the key here is to stay in for at least five minutes). Buy a foam roller, and take some time to roll out your muscles

at night while you're watching television. Then, use a Biomat® to receive some benefits of infrared recovery, using it at least a few times a week.

To experience a full infrared sauna-like treatment with the Biomat®, turn the heat to high and cover yourself with a cotton sheet or blanket and allow your body to get to the point of sweating over the course of 40 minutes to an hour. Remember to properly hydrate after any sauna like session with adequate electrolyte liquids.

Laying on the Biomat® for 20 to 40 minutes on a low to medium heat makes a significant difference in my recovery time. It helps me to feel more relaxed after exertion, and the muscles don't stay as tense over the course of the day and days to follow. I tend to do this daily, shortly after my yoga or surf session, for at least 20 minutes or more if I have time to

spare.

The Biomat® is effective for temporary relief from:

- Minor muscle pain
- Minor joint pain and stiffness
- Joint pain associated with arthritis
- Muscle spasms / Minor sprains
- Minor strains / Minor muscular back pain

You can use the Biomat® by doing either a full infrared sauna-like treatment or a lighter restorative session and enjoy the rehabilitative recovery from strenuous physical activity. You will see a difference if you combine all the fundamentals of basic physiological recovery from exercise, with the more modern "bio-hacks," including the infrared technology from the Biomat®. Have fun and rest up!



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