



Getting you to the Finish Line: It Can Be the Little Things

Sue Reynolds Reed, MS, LAT
Athletic Trainer
Aurora Sports Health

REMINDER: To reduce coronavirus exposure, get vaccinated, practice social distancing by maintaining at least six feet between yourself and others, wash your hands often, and wear a facemask. To learn more, visit the Advocate Aurora Health COVID-19 Resource Center: www.aah.org/COVID-19

To Bend or Stand Following Intense Activity

We've all done it – following an intense interval workout or sprint to the finish line, we either walk around with our hands on our heads or we bend over with our hands on our knees. *Is one recovery position better than the other?*

The little things: To get the maximum effect from incorporating interval work into your training program, it could be the little things that can take you to the next level. A 2019 study published by Western Washington University evaluated two recovery postures during high-level interval workouts: Hands-on-head or hands-on-knees. The standardized workout consisted of four cycles of four minutes each on a treadmill at 90-95% of the participant's predicted maximum heart rate (i.e., calculated as 220 minus the participant's age multiplied by 90% to 95%), followed by three minutes of passive recovery in one of the two identified recovery postures. To record heart rate, a chest band monitor was used; a max VO₂ apparatus measured carbon dioxide elimination and tidal volume.

Analysis components: The study looked at recovery heart rate, carbon dioxide elimination and tidal volume between the two identified recovery postures. Recovery heart rate assesses how quickly your heart rate decreases post exercise – the faster the decrease in heart rate, the better conditioned you are. An efficient elimination of carbon dioxide (i.e. waste products in your breathing) improves recovery and delays fatigue. Tidal volume measures the amount of air you move in and out with each breath. The study controlled the position of lumbar flexion (the degree of forward bend) during the "hands-on-knees" recovery method for each participant.

For each of the measured effects -- *heart rate recovery, elimination of carbon dioxide and tidal volume* – the research confirmed that the hands-on-knees recovery position was statistically better than using the hands-on-head option. The research suggests that the hands-on-knees posture improves the parasympathetic influences (i.e., heart rate and breathing) while putting your body into a maximized recovery position (i.e., cardiorespiratory mechanics).

So, sometimes it's the little things like hands-on-knees posture during a hard interval set or following an intense, long run that can speed your recovery and maximize the training effect.

When movement causes pain, Aurora Sports Health is here for you with Free Injury Evaluations. And, if physical therapy is recommended, Direct Access scheduling allows you to start treatment and begin feeling better right away – check with your insurance provider to confirm Direct Access coverage. Assessments are easy to schedule – visit: aurora.org/FreeInjuryEval

Reference:

Michaelson, Joana V.; Brilla, Lorrie R.; Suprak, David N.; McLaughlin, Wren L.; Dahlquist, Dylan T. Effects of Two Different Recovery Postures during High-Intensity Interval Training, Translational Journal of the ACSM: February 15, 2019 - Volume 4 - Issue 4 - p 23-27. doi: 10.1249/TJX.0000000000000079

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