



ENDURANCE
SPECIFIC
COACHING

Don't Train through Sickness

This should really be common sense but unfortunately it's not and athletes make some huge judgment errors which not only affects the consistency of their training but more importantly pushing it while sick or soon after can damage your long term health.

Many times I have had an athlete who should have known better, get sick and rightly take a few days off and then wrongly start right back at full volume and intensity on a depressed immune system because they are worried about losing a long session. This is basically health suicide.

Here are some hard and fast rules when it comes to illness:

- If you're sick or on the verge of becoming sick, immediately take a day off. Then see how you feel the following day and make the decision to train or not using the test drive the body approach.
- When coming back to training, it is essential that you ease the body into the training. I'm talking 2-3 days that would look like this:
- Day 1: Short (30min maximum) light session of either cycling or swimming with some short light efforts (10-20 seconds).
- Day 2: If you have not regressed, do an easy short (30min) run and then another easy short (30min) session of swim or bike. One of these sessions should have a few (3) short efforts of 15-30 seconds with full recovery between to lightly stimulate the systems and get them back on track. If you do the efforts on the bike, choose your biggest gear, in the swim use paddles. If you regress, take another day off and start again!
- Day 3: If you are still improving, pick back up your training where you are in the plan. However, reduce the volume by a quarter and reduce the intensity of the efforts. Do not play the make up game as you'll put yourself backwards.
- If you have been tracking your morning resting heart rate then you can effectively use that as a guide when to resume training. When it is elevated 5-10bpm higher than usual then take the day off. Also if you have started easing back in and the light sessions cause a higher heart rate than normal it simply means you have not recovered enough.

Your long term health is just not worth pushing it when you're sick. I understand you may be highly driven to get back into training but doing so too quickly will see both your performance and health suffer. Play it smart and don't gamble with your health.

Also when you are sick, focus on what you CAN do, which is to prioritize the things that will get you back healthy quick. Rest, sleep, great nutrition, hydration and some extra VitD3, VitC and Zinc.