

6 Rules for Equine Athlete Recovery

What is the plan for recovering your equine athlete between intense training and competition? Sometimes, we can be so focused on the end results; we do not plan for the athlete's recovery. This is apparent at many competitions, on all levels. The fastest athlete is not necessarily the one that comes away with the win, when multiple runs are involved. Athletes that are able to increase performance as they progress through multiple competitions have a definite advantage over their competition. That ability requires quick recovery between races, which needs to be practiced and planned months before.

6 Simple Rules for Equine Recovery:

1. Nutrition: What a horse eats affects how quickly they recover.

Muscle: The high aerobic demand on equine athletes requires increased protein levels because they breakdown muscle during workouts and races.

Energy: Fat is also important. Fat is a longer sustaining fuel source for an equine athlete. Carbohydrates can be a "quick energy" fuel source, but overloading can have a negative effect. It is important to feed protein, fat and carbohydrates in the proper proportion for your demanding workout and race needs.

Joints: The equine athlete's connective tissue is under stress during races and heavy training. In order to recovery faster and help prevent injury, the athlete needs additional supplements specific to joint recovery and health. [Equine Catalyst Joint Supplement](#)

2. Ice: The equine athlete takes a beating during competition. Icing joints and skeletal muscles is a proactive way to decrease muscle inflammation. Icing is a normal part of a professional athlete's routine. Though it may not be necessary after every practice or competition, it will definitely help your equine athlete recover faster. [Flow Boots](#)

3. Mental: Training sessions requiring lots of thinking can be just as physically and mentally stressful to an equine athlete and rider as normal training. Keep a healthy balance between FUN and COMPETITIVE training.

4. Hydration: Drink more water. Proper hydration starts weeks before the race. Get your equine athlete in a hydration pattern well before competition season. Some will drink less in new places or different water. Understand your athlete's needs and monitor their water consumption.

5. Active Recovery: A workout where your athlete is training at a very LOW intensity and building back some of their aerobic capacity. Focus on other training aspects such as: technique, flexibility, stability and body placement.

6. Complete Rest: It is okay to take time off. A big part of RECOVERY is REST. Understand your athlete and what they are capable of. Rest is sometimes the most beneficial thing you can give your athlete.