

YOUR PT CLOSET

Build up your supply of at-home physical therapy tools.

BY MACKENZIE LOBBY HAVEY

WHEN IT COMES TO BEING A HEALTHY and successful triathlete, the behind-the-scenes supplementary work athletes do can be just as important as the training itself. In particular, housing an arsenal of at-home physical therapy tools can go a long way in keeping you up and running. “I believe that every athlete should have some basic body-work aids at their disposal,” says Dana Reid, DPT, a triathlete and physical therapist based in Hood River, Ore.

These aids can include everything from fancy foam rollers, massage sticks, run-of-the-mill tennis or lacrosse balls to ice cups, frozen and ready in your freezer.

“Using rollers to keep muscles at an optimal length and avoid over-tensioned fascia can prevent subtle overuse injuries from poor patterning during swimming, biking and running,” Reid says. “Additionally, having a variety of ways to ice acutely sore areas—ice packs, cups, buckets—is a great way to quickly get on top of an inflammatory response.”

While these tools aren’t meant to address acute injuries, having a routine for taking on aches and pains and aiding recovery is important if you hope to bounce back from tough workouts. Keep in mind that training load and your own individual response to workouts will guide

the structure of this regimen of body maintenance. Reid recommends that most triathletes utilize these types of at-home physical therapy tools 3–5 days per week for as little as 10 minutes each session.

To accomplish this, she suggests relying on “temptation bundling,” a term coined by economist Katherine Milkman. “The idea is that you can tie something you don’t like doing, like stretching or body care, with something you do enjoy, like your favorite guilty pleasure TV show, audio book or podcast,” she explains. “By doing this, you are using the motivation of wanting to participate in something you enjoy

to help you achieve something less fun but necessary.”

Since supplementary exercises can be tough to add into an already packed multisport training schedule, this is a great way to get into the habit of regular muscle maintenance. You may even find that you end up looking forward to it.

If you’re looking to stock your PT closet for your next triathlon season, check out these top products.



EvoFit Enso Muscle Roller
\$80, EvoFitforlife.com

Marc Pro Plus Muscle Stimulation Device
\$650, Marcpro.com

TriggerPoint GRID STK Roller
\$35, Tptherapy.com

Theraband Stretch Strap
\$28, Performancehealth.com

SKLZ Cold Roller Ball
\$40, Sklz.com

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