



2023

IR Guide



*Stay productive
during recovery!*

*Greetings from
Wellness!*

WELCOME



The Wellness Team at the NFLPA is here to ensure that you have the resources to maximize your performance on and off the field. While our primary goal is to provide you with the tools to keep you healthy, we've also got you covered when you're injured.

The reason you're receiving this outreach is because of your status on IR. We hope that this guide can help make the best of your time away from the game. Inside, you will find key staff contacts who work on your behalf and resources to aid in your recovery.

One of the most difficult aspects of time on IR is the sheer toll it can take on you. While we know the physical impact well, we don't talk as much about the impact it has emotionally and socially, which can change how you think, feel, and act. While this is completely normal, it's important to make sure you are managing it productively. Focus your energy only on what's in your control, and make your self-care and recovery your top priority.

We wish you a smooth and speedy recovery.



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*IR
Handbook*

Workers' COMPENSATION

- All players who are on Injured Reserve should contact the Workers' Compensation Panel Member in their city to discuss possible benefits for their work injury.
- Benefits may include cash, payment for future medical treatment, and/or vocational retraining.
- All players should have set up access to their Electronic Medical Record (EMR) portal.
- Contact Carmen Cordova-Castro for assistance with EMR access (Carmen.Cordova-Castro@nflpa.com).
- Contact Ned Ehrlich for assistance or questions about which Workers' Comp Panel Member you should call (Ned.Ehrlich@nflpa.com).

FROM A PHYSICAL THERAPIST

- Take ownership of your rehabilitation, be invested in your return to the field and ask questions
- Understand general recovery time-frames for your injury but appreciate everyone responds/recovers differently.
- Nutrition, hydration, and sleep are critical!! You can't out train or rehab a poor diet or poor sleep.
- A systematic approach to rehab and performance that values movement quality will optimize your return to the field

Brent Callaway.

EXOS

FROM A NUTRITIONIST

GET ADVICE

- Inflammation post injury needs to be balanced by proper diet and supplementation; it can help speed up your recovery time up to 30% faster.
- An anti-inflammatory diet rich in antioxidants, lean meats, fatty fishes, fruits and vegetables is extremely important.
- Avoid pro-inflammatory foods such as fried foods, cakes and candy. These will delay your healing process.
- Your metabolism increases after an injury. You need to eat enough food to allow your body to rebuild and repair the cells and tissue. Increase your protein by 30% and your calories by 20%. Protein shakes loaded with fruit and peanut butter are a great way to get these calories in when your appetite is decreased.
- If you took antibiotics to prevent infection after injury eating foods high in probiotics such as yogurt is important. You can also supplement with a probiotic.

Jaclyn Sklavens
ATHLEATS NUTRITION





STAGES OF RECOVERY

After an injury, you may feel as if nothing is in your control. but there is one area that you do have control over and it can help speed up your recovery.

Through proper nutrition, *you can decide what is going into your body and help the healing process.*

3 STAGES OF RECOVERY:

- Inflammation (Week 1): brings red blood cells to the area to be in recovery & deliver nutrients
- Proliferation (Weeks 2--4): growth and regeneration of tissue
- Remodeling (Weeks 4-2 Years): strengthening and permanent tissue generation

The first 7 days after injury or surgery is the most important/ r nutritional consideration. The metabolic demands put on our body to repair tissue is upwards of 20% more than a healthy person.

This means you must *increase your calories by 15-10% and have a high daily protein intake.* The right food & supplements can increase the speed of your recovery.



EATING AFTER AN INJURY

THE IDEAL DIET: ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DIET RICH IN ANTIOXIDANTS

- Fatty fishes (salmon, tuna, mackerel)
- Olive oil, flaxseed oil, avocado oil, avocado
- Nuts & seeds (Brazil nuts, walnuts, almonds, cashews, pumpkin seeds)
- Fruit (grapefruit, orange, strawberries, guava, watermelon, pineapple)
- Berries (pomegranate, goji berries, blueberries, grapes, blackberries, raspberries)
- Dark leafy greens (spinach, kale, collard greens)
- Vegetables (beets, carrots, sweet potatoes, bell peppers)
- Shellfish (oysters, mussels, lobster, crab)
- Lean meats (bison, lean beef, chicken turkey, pasture raised eggs, tofu)
- Probiotic foods (Greek yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, pickles)
- Spices (ginger, turmeric, garlic, capsin pepper, oregano, basil, raw cacao powder)
- Fluids (green tea, beet juice, coconut water, pineapple juice, water and electrolytes)

Avoid fried food, junk food and candy, processed and packaged foods: heavy creams, vegetable oils processed meats.



INFLAMMATION



THE IDEAL RECOVERY DIET

Inflammation helps recovery, but *too much inflammation can cause limited mobility and damage to healthy tissue around the injury*. We want to balance inflammation through diet and supplements.

After an injury diet is very important, but we also need supplements to reach the amount of nutrients needed. All of the following supplements evidence based are proved to speed up recovery time.

SUPPLEMENTS:

Day 1-7 is the most important time to take the following supplements. Order them prior to surgery or as soon as possible, or you can send someone to Whole Foods or a local vitamin store to get these products. I suggest a product called Juven by Abbott Labs which you can purchase online. Take 1 packet 2X a day for 2-4 weeks. Juven provides the following amino acids: HMB, Glutamine, and Arginine.

In addition to Juven, you also need to take the following supplements 2X per day:

Collagen peptides
Vitamin C (take with collagen)
Proteolytic enzymes (before meals)
Vitamin A
Vitamin D3 with K2 (liposomal)
Fish oil
Curcumin
Probiotic
If needed for constipation - Acacia fiber

It can be hard to eat after an injury. Stress, depression, less exercise and mental state all can decrease your appetite, but it is more important now than ever to continue to keep your body fueled. *Your body is working hard to rebuild and you want to prevent muscle loss during this time.*

TIPS FOR CONSUMING CALORIES:

- Try to have small meals every 3-4 hours.
- Drink your nutrients if eating is difficult
- Have high calorie, nutrient dense protein shakes.

WHAT A TYPICAL MEAL SHOULD LOOK LIKE:

- Protein: 1g per pound of body weight daily / palm sized portions of protein with each meal
- Carbs: 1 cupped palm or 1 baseball sized portion
- Fat: 2 thumb sized portions
- Veggies: the rest of your plate

It is best to be prepared as soon as you return home from surgery. Have a family member or friend order your supplements and go food shopping. If you will be in the hospital for longer than one day, ask a family member to bring you prepared food, or a meal for after surgery so you don't have to eat hospital food. If you have a meal prep company or chef cooking for you, share these pages with them.

FROM A SLEEP SPECIALIST

SLEEP PERFORMANCE PLAYBOOK

- **GO LONG**
 - Assess and commit. Be honest about how much actual sleep you're getting. Commit to sleep performance and set your alarm for no less than 7 hours every night.
- **TEAM UP**
 - Talk to other players on your team or on IR. Share thoughts and ideas about sleep issues, strategies, tools and results. Create a community that encourages and values sleep as a performance enhancer.
- **GET IN THE ZONE**
 - Put down your phone and turn off your TV to stop all screen staring 30 minutes before sleep time. Think of this time as your sleep warmup. Focus on relaxation by reading a book, journaling, meditating, praying, listening to soothing music or white noise, or other quiet in-activities.
- **EYES ON THE PRIZE**
 - Use your Inactivators Performance Sleep Mask – a visual trigger and physical barrier – that keeps your eyes on the sleep prize. Inactivators provide total darkness (so sleep-enhancing melatonin is naturally released), and built-in temperature regulation to keep the face cool (to help you fall and stay asleep longer).
- **DREAM IT, DO IT**
 - Visualize your brain and body working and rejuvenating during sleep. See sleep re-arming your immune system, increasing your strength and endurance, re-regenerating your muscles, balancing your emotions, decreasing your stress, and soothing any pain or trauma.
- **PRE-GAME PEP TALK**
 - Take a few slow, deep breaths and repeat a positive sleep affirmation several times. We suggest: "I'm gonna crush this sleep workout. . ."
- **EXTRA POINTS**
 - Consistency is the key to adopting this new sleep routine, so reward yourself after completing 7 hours of sleep. Set rewards after 1 night, 1 week and 1 month to keep yourself motivated and on pace to optimizing every night, now and when you're back in the game!

THE INACTIVE COMPANY

A Sleep Performance Company

READY. SET. SLEEP.

TRAIN FOR SLEEP PERFORMANCE

Studies show that a majority of athletes get fewer than the critical 7-9 hours of good sleep. Even if you think you are getting enough sleep, chances are you are overestimating your sleep time by about an hour. Being in bed – but on your phone or watching TV – doesn't count!

While you're on IR, it's a great time to train for better sleep performance. You'll heal faster. Now – and when you're recovered – you can improve your overall health and performance by as much as 60% with solid sleep performance.

WHAT IS SLEEP PERFORMANCE?

Sleep performance is leveling up using consistent, quality sleep as a health and performance enhancer by optimizing the "other" 12 hours of the day.

Sleep is the only human performance factor you can't replace – you can't buy it, fake it, cheat it, or steal it. You can't take it in a pill form or mix it into a smoothie. You simply have to sleep.

FIND YOUR SLEEP PERFORMANCE ROUTINE

- Maximize the nighttime by using the same discipline you use for active workouts. Treat it like training – prioritize and protect your time.
- Create your personalized sleep performance routine using the Inactive Sleep Performance Playbook of proven strategies, plus other tools that work for you.

Level up as you lie down.



INVEST

IN OTHER AREAS

PERSONAL FINANCE

- Take steps toward financial wellness by meeting with [Financial Finesse](#) for free, unbiased one-on-one financial coaching sessions. Financial Finesse can help you build a budget, learn the basics of investing, prepare you to interview financial advisors and more
- Browse through a list of vetted individual financial advisors and financial institutions featured in [Financial Advisor Registration Program](#) when you log into [nflpa.com](#).
- Monitor and protect your identity and credit by signing up for [Identity Guard](#).
- Learn more about these resources at [nflpa.com/finance](#).

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- **Career Experiences** | Participate in our Career Experiences to explore industries such as TV broadcasting, business, technology, nonprofits, media, collegiate athletics and more! Experiences consist of networking with industry leaders, job shadowing, and receiving guidance on how to be successful in the industry. Experiences take place in the offseason. More information will be posted at [nflpa.com/careerexperiences](#).
- **AthLife Career Advising Services** | Take assessments on your career interests, work on your LinkedIn profile, resume, networking strategies and more with an AthLife career coach. Sign up at [nflpa.com/athlife](#).

CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Whether you're interested in getting back on the path toward finishing your undergraduate degree or looking for a new educational journey we've got options for you. Listed below are a few of our marquee programs.
- + Harvard Crossover into Business Program (Fall Enrollment)
- + Kelley School Of Business (Fall, Spring, Summer Enrollment)
- Don't see anything that connects with you yet? We also offer free online self paced courses through Yellowbrick like streetwear fashion essentials or come explore our tuition reimbursement eligible discounted certificate, boot-camp or short-course offerings with UMGCC, 2U in areas like business, real estate, coding, cybersecurity, digital marketing and more.



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JOURNALING

Rookie year is exciting but can come with some challenges. Self-reflect and set your goals for the season by using a journal provided to you by NFLPA. Reach out to your DPE or email wellness@nflpa.com for your journal today.



You have access up to 8 free sessions with [Cigna](#). Check out the [Mental Health & Counseling](#) page for more information.

MEDITATION



Contact wellness@nflpa.com for your free one year subscription

INJURED RESERVE

PAIR is a program for any player on IR. For more information and to register to attend, [click here](#).

WELLNESS AMBASSADOR

Are you interested in being a leader in the field of wellness? Sign up to be a wellness ambassador by contacting wellness@nflpa.com

**VISIT
NFLPA.COM/WELLNESS
FOR MORE.**



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IR Guide



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