

# COMPLETE INJURY RECOVERY GUIDE

GAME  READY®



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# INTRODUCTION

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Most people experience an injury at least once in their lives, and athletes in particular are susceptible to sprained ankles, torn ligaments, contusions, and other painful injuries.

Whether you have strained your back while gardening or taken a hard hit to the knee while playing soccer, recovery is both a top priority and a daunting prospect. The good news is that actively participating in your recovery may help you get back to your normal routine as quickly as possible. For most people, especially with appropriate care, an injury is only a temporary setback. After you recover, it's important to try to continue taking an active role in maintaining your health to help prevent future injuries and to promote your overall well-being.

If you want to return to normal activity and stay healthy after an injury, this guide is here to help. It provides useful tips, tools, and methods to help you heal as quickly as possible from an injury and to help you stay healthy after you have recovered.

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# TIPS, TOOLS, AND METHODS

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## Sleep and Rest

Every injury is different, and the recovery process may take days, weeks, or even months, depending on your overall health and the severity of the injury.

Getting ample rest after an injury presents a challenge for many people. Athletes want to get back on the field as quickly as possible. Busy parents need to keep up with their kids, and people don't want to spend too much time away from work. Most injuries don't require life to come to a screeching halt, but it is important to slow down, especially in the first few days after the injury occurs.

The body needs energy to heal, so it's important to allow enough time to recharge while damaged tissues are being repaired. Getting enough good-quality sleep after an injury can help the body heal. Tissue rejuvenates at night, so low-quality or limited sleep can stall the healing process.<sup>1</sup> Try to create a quiet, restful environment that allows you to get uninterrupted sleep, and take more breaks than usual throughout the day to allow the body to rest during the recovery process.

**Try to create a quiet, restful environment that allows you to get uninterrupted sleep.**





**Some of the methods you may try to help promote more restful sleep include<sup>2</sup>:**

- ▶ Following a bedtime routine that may allow you to relax and wind down for the day.
- ▶ Making your bedroom dark and quiet so there are no distractions.
- ▶ Trying to avoid consuming caffeine in the afternoon and evening.
- ▶ Reducing or eliminating alcohol consumption.
- ▶ Trying to stay on a regular sleep schedule so your body knows when to shut down.
- ▶ Avoiding heavy, fatty foods right before bed.
- ▶ Getting plenty of natural light. This may be tough if you work an office job or are recovering from an injury, because you might not spend much time outside. Try scheduling a walk for 20 minutes each morning or evening.

Maintaining these habits even after recovering from an injury may help ensure that you continue to get sufficient rest and allow your body the opportunity to recover from the day's activities.



## Exercise

Though rest is certainly an important component of a fast recovery, it's important not to stop all activity altogether.

Becoming too sedentary after an injury may make it difficult to return to activity after the body has healed, and it may also increase the risk of other types of injuries if you try to do too much too soon. A sedentary lifestyle may also impact your overall health, increasing your risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and chronic pain.<sup>3</sup>

Work with your healthcare provider or physical therapist to determine what types of activities are appropriate for your injury. For example, you may be able to focus on building upper body strength while recovering from an ankle sprain. Though a shoulder injury might prevent you from running for a certain period of time, you might be able to maintain a walking routine for cardiovascular exercise while you recover.

Always remember that it's important not to push your body too far while it continues to recover and that you might not be able to do as much as you normally would. As you continue to heal, you can add on more intense activities. With the right activities, you may be able to return to normal activity without having to regain lost strength and flexibility in other areas.



### There's an App for Recovery, Too

**Some of the tools you may use to stay active while recovering from an injury include:**

- ▶ Fitness trackers such as Fitbit and Jawbone
- ▶ Programs that monitor food and exercise, such as MyFitnessPal
- ▶ Online fitness programs such as Daily Burn and iBodyFit
- ▶ Injury recovery apps such as My Injury
- ▶ Physical therapy apps such as Pocket Anatomy and Pt Pal Pro



## Healthy Diet and Hydration

Good nutrition is another essential component of injury recovery. The body needs energy in the form of calories to heal itself, but it's important for those calories to come from healthy foods that provide nutrients and do not contribute to additional inflammation.

### Some healthy choices during injury recovery include:

- ▶ Proteins, especially lean proteins such as fish and chicken
- ▶ Healthy fats such as olive oil, flaxseeds, and avocados
- ▶ Anti-inflammatory spices such as turmeric
- ▶ Antioxidant-rich fruits such as blueberries<sup>4</sup>



Avoid trying to diet or lose weight during recovery, because this may deprive your body of key nutrients it needs to recover.<sup>5</sup> Try to avoid processed, greasy foods and trans fats, which may promote inflammation. Alcohol may also slow recovery.<sup>6</sup>







**Most adult women need about 91 total fluid ounces of water a day, while most adult men need around 125 fluid ounces.**

Maintaining a balanced diet that includes a mix of proteins, carbohydrates, fruits, and vegetables may help ensure that your body gets the nutrients it needs to heal quickly. If you need help striking the right balance, consider using a nutrition app such as Fooducate or ShopWell.

Perhaps more importantly, not being properly hydrated may actually slow down injury recovery because it reduces the amount of oxygen and nutrients that are able to reach damaged tissues, which is an important part of healing.<sup>7</sup>

Let your thirst guide your daily water intake, unless you take medication that leaves you dehydrated. Most adult women need about 91 total fluid ounces of water a day, while most adult men need around 125 fluid ounces. This figure includes water from food and non-water drinks, so the amount of water you need to drink may be significantly less than this.<sup>8</sup>

There are plenty of free apps available to help you stay hydrated throughout the day, including iDrate, Waterlogged, and Daily Water.





## Socializing

Having a painful injury can impact your mood, but it doesn't have to dominate your life. Maintaining an active social life, even if it has to temporarily be digital while you're laid up, can help you stay in good spirits and distract you from your injury. Research is increasingly pointing to the health perils of loneliness. Some analysts argue that it's just as bad for your health—and, therefore, your healing—as obesity.<sup>9</sup>

Don't allow yourself to feel isolated after an injury. If you are not mobile, invite a family member or friend over to occasionally keep you company. Spend time talking about your friends' lives and families, not just the injury. Talking about the future can also be helpful because it may encourage you to stick with your rehab plan so you can get back to your daily life.

Injuries can be particularly demoralizing for athletes because they set back progress, prevent participation in competition, and impact the sense of self-identity and self-esteem.

Staying active on the team, even from the sidelines, will keep you engaged throughout your injury recovery and allow you to look forward to when you can play again. Remember that you may be able to continue certain exercises that don't impact your injury. Ask your doctor about participating in team practices on a limited basis. Even if you can't physically participate, showing up to observe can help you feel included and remind you of the important role your team plays in your life.

You can also continue to join team social events even while you temporarily can't play sports. If you participate in an individual sport such as running or cycling, stay connected to the community through online forums and discussion boards. You can gain new tips from other athletes who have suffered the same injury and get inspiration from their recovery success stories.



## Massage

Massage can be an effective tool for improving recovery after an injury because it increases circulation and stimulates the flow of vital nutrients.<sup>10</sup> Bringing freshly oxygenated blood and other beneficial elements to damaged tissues may help promote healing and ensures that the body's cells have what they need to complete the repair process. Additionally, pressure from a massage therapist's hands actively removes toxins and the excess fluids that may cause unwanted swelling.<sup>11</sup>

By encouraging the muscles to relax, massage also helps prevent painful muscle spasms that may occur after an injury. If you experience muscle tension from long periods spent sitting or lying in bed, massage therapy may help reduce the tension and the pain it causes.<sup>12</sup>

Certain types of massage may also help improve range of motion with passive movement of the joints and assisted stretching. A relaxing massage is also a great way to distract the mind from the recovery process and help reduce the anxiety that comes with an injury.





## Physical Therapy

Physical therapy restores muscle function and strength following an injury. Treatment often starts with passive exercises that mobilize the joints without engaging the surrounding muscles. As healing progresses, light exercises that increase in intensity may help strengthen supporting muscles and increase joint stability.<sup>13</sup>

At some point, your physical therapist is likely to recommend a home exercise routine to supplement clinic sessions, so it is important to stay engaged in treatment even away from therapy. Ask your physical therapist if they recommend any apps, such as BlueJay Engage, that may help you stay on track at home. A physical therapist might also incorporate other types of treatment such as massage, cold therapy, heat therapy, or electrical stimulation. All of this effort to maintain mobility helps prevent stiffness and helps ensure a return to normal range of motion.

Without physical therapy, an injury may take longer to heal, and the body may be less prepared to return to activity. You might also find that surrounding muscles are weaker, or that movements that once felt easy become challenging. Physical therapy offers personally tailored feedback based on your needs, pain level, treatment goals, activity level, and more.

Doctors routinely recommend PT following surgery or a major injury. PT may also help you recover from minor injuries. Another benefit of physical therapy is that the therapist often provides instruction on how to prevent future injuries with specific stretches, techniques for improving form, and other tips for avoiding recurring problems.

**Without physical therapy, an injury may take longer to heal, and the body may be less prepared to return to activity.**



## Cold and Compression Therapy

Therapeutic cold and compression may ease pain and help the injury heal faster.<sup>14</sup>

After an injury, the body's natural inflammatory response protects the surrounding tissues from further damage. However, if inflammation is not controlled, it may cause greater discomfort and slow down the recovery process. Compression helps prevent the buildup of excess fluids (edema) while cold therapy slows down cellular metabolism.<sup>15,16</sup>

There are many ways to apply cold and compression therapy. The classic method is to simply apply an ice pack to the affected area for specific periods of time and to wrap it in a static compression bandage between cold treatment sessions. Other methods for applying cold may include whole-body cryotherapy chambers, ice baths, and cold therapy machines.

**Compression helps prevent the buildup of excess fluids (edema) while cold therapy slows down cellular metabolism.**







## WHY GAME READY IS IDEAL FOR RECOVERY

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Game Ready is a patented system that combines cold and compression therapy in one easy-to-use machine that helps aid the injury recovery process.

**The Game Ready system has two components:**


1. An advanced control unit with an ice reservoir that uses ACCEL® (Active Compression and Cold Exchange Loop) technology to simultaneously deliver active compression and therapeutic cold at a controlled and consistent temperature
2. Anatomically designed wraps that conform to the body help to remove heat from the injured area, while added compression actively pumps away excess fluids, and helps stimulate the flow of blood and nutrients to promote healing

Game Ready offers wraps for every major body part, so no matter where the injury is, Game Ready may be used to help reduce pain and swelling and promote healing.

Thousands of athletes and patients choose Game Ready for a wide range of reasons, such as:

- ▶ Game Ready is clinically proven to help decrease pain and swelling.
- ▶ Game Ready helps to reduce opioid consumption and may allow for discontinued use sooner. Recovery time may be reduced by at least 20 percent in some patients (according to Dr. Peter J. Millett of The Steadman Clinic).
- ▶ The system is convenient and portable.
- ▶ Helps improve progress toward key measurable recovery milestones.

If you are recovering from an injury or surgery, ask your doctor or physical therapist about adding Game Ready to your treatment program.

A photograph showing a physical therapist in a grey shirt and tan pants assisting a patient with a knee injury. The therapist is using both hands to support and stabilize the patient's knee. The patient is wearing dark grey leggings and is lying down. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting with large windows.

Recovery time may be reduced  
by at least **20 PERCENT**  
in some patients



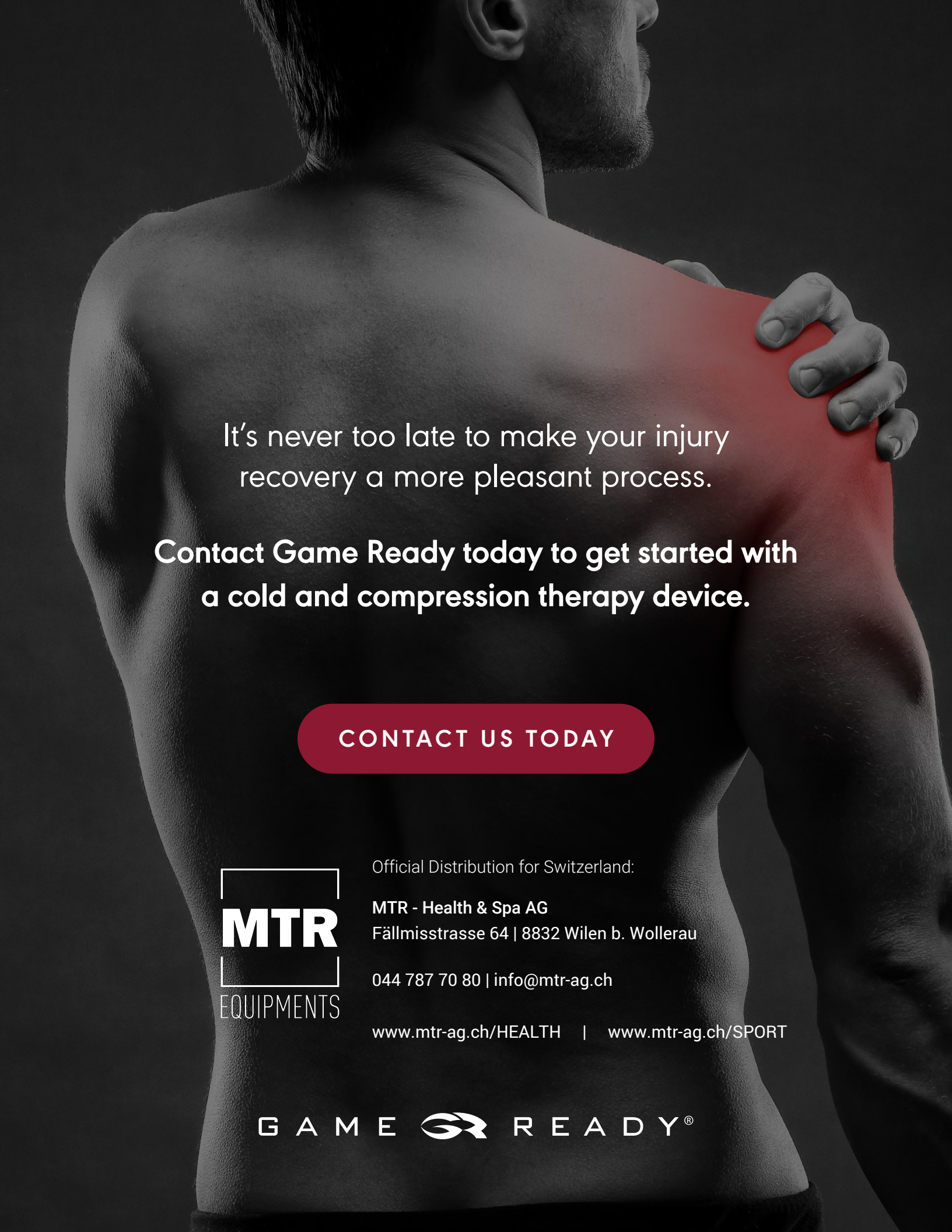
You can use Game Ready at your physical therapy clinic or rent a system for convenient home use at any time of the day or night. Suffering an injury is painful and inconvenient, but taking an active role in your recovery means you may be able to return to a normal routine and get back to the things that matter as quickly as possible.

**Remember these tips to take control of your recovery:**

- ▶ Get enough good sleep and rest when you can.
- ▶ Exercise as much as your injury safely allows.
- ▶ Maintain a healthy diet and stay hydrated.
- ▶ Stay social to keep your spirits high.
- ▶ Use massage therapy to help improve the flow of blood and nutrients.
- ▶ Work with a physical therapist to help improve strength and flexibility.
- ▶ Use a cold therapy machine for active cold and compression.







It's never too late to make your injury  
recovery a more pleasant process.

**Contact Game Ready today to get started with  
a cold and compression therapy device.**

**CONTACT US TODAY**



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