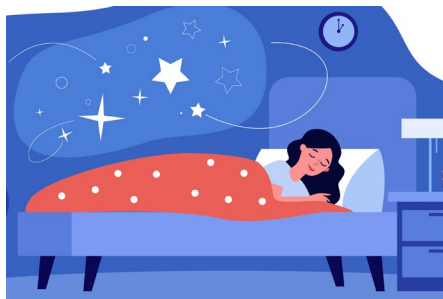


DANCER HEALTH TIPS FROM UAB SPORTS & EXERCISE MEDICINE

Rest and Recovery for Longevity and Injury Prevention

Grace Brown, BS, UAB Heersink School of Medicine Student

What may look effortless to others, actually takes a lot of strength, repetition, and training for dancers. Because of this, it is important for dancers to incorporate adequate rest into their routine. Rest includes more than just getting a good night's sleep. It involves physical rest, active recovery, cross-training, good nutrition, adequate hydration, and sleep.



Complete physical rest can be hard to fit into a dancer's busy schedule, but it is still very important. When the body has time to rest, it heals and adapts to the training or exercise you have done. This helps you rebuild more strongly and lowers your risk of injury. Sleep is when your body does most of this recovery, but if the body does not get enough rest during the day as well, dancers can experience overuse, fatigue, and a higher chance of injury or burnout. Rest helps repair muscles and tendons, decrease inflammation, often the cause of common dance injuries like tendinitis, and prevents mistakes due to fatigue or poor technique. Planning and prioritizing rest days, along with getting enough sleep, lets the body fully recover. (See [March 2024 Dancer Health Tips](#) for more information about sleep).

If a rest day is not possible, cross-training can help build cardiovascular fitness or work different muscles that dance does not always target. (See [February 2025 Dancer Health Tips](#) for more information about cross-training). Active recovery is another way to enhance your body's recovery process. This can involve low-intensity exercises, stretching, or massaging to help promote blood flow without causing additional strain. Good nutrition and hydration are also essential, as they help the body recover, prepare for the next training session, and reduce injury risk.



Maintaining balance is not limited to a dancer's technique. Finding ways to ensure your body has enough time to rest, even with a busy schedule, is key to staying healthy, preventing injury and supporting a long dance career.

Is there a dancer health related topic you want to learn more about? Or maybe you have a specific question? Send those to us via email (rachel@alabamadancecouncil.org) and we will try to answer them in future articles.

References

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About the Authors



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