

RECOVER SMARTER

Simple Tips for Faster Healing After Injury



“A practical guide to healing smarter, not just faster. Discover simple, science-backed tips to help your body recover fully and come back stronger after injury.”

BY BRITT LEEWORTHY, R.AC | MEND HEALTH CO.



Why Smart Recovery Matters

Getting injured can be frustrating. Maybe it happened on the mountain, in the gym, or even doing something simple in daily life. Either way, you probably just want to get back to doing the things you love.

The truth is, recovery doesn't happen on autopilot. Yes, time helps, but the way you support your body in those days and weeks after an injury can either speed things up — or hold you back.

The good news? You have more control than you think. By focusing on the four pillars of recovery — nutrition, hydration, rest and movement — you give your body the foundation it needs to heal.

Acupuncture adds the spark: it improves circulation, reactivates inhibited muscles, and calms the nervous system, creating the ideal conditions for those pillars to do their work faster and more effectively.

“Every injury invites you to pause, pay attention, and rebuild. When you give your body the support it needs, recovery doesn't just restore you — it makes you stronger than before.”

Healing Takes Time: What Science Says

One of the hardest parts of recovery is patience. We live in a world that tells us to push through pain or bounce back quickly — but your body doesn't work that way. Healing is a process, and it follows a rhythm that can't be rushed.

Typical Tissue Healing Timelines

- Muscle → 2–4 weeks for mild strains, up to 6 weeks if more significant.
- Tendon → 6–12 weeks; slower due to limited blood flow.
- Ligament → 8–12 weeks; ankle sprains are a common example.
- Bone → around 6–8 weeks for most fractures.
- Cartilage → months to years — the slowest tissue to repair.

The Three Stages of Healing

1

Inflammatory Stage (0–3 days)

Right after injury, the body sends healing cells to clean up the area. Swelling, heat, and soreness are normal signs that repair has begun. Take it easy, elevate, compress and apply cold to the injured area.

2

Repair Stage (3 days – 6 weeks)

The body lays down new scar tissue to patch the injured area. At first it's fragile and unorganized, but gentle movement and treatment guide it to heal in the right direction. Use hot/cold contrast: 3 minutes heat to 1 minute cold.

3

Remodeling Stage (3 weeks - 6 months)

The new tissue begins to get stronger and more flexible. Consistent movement and hands-on care help it remodel properly, reducing the risk of stiffness or long-term weakness. Use heat as needed for stiffness or soreness.

When To Come for Acupuncture

Acupuncture can support healing at every stage.

- **Early Recovery:** it calms pain and reduces swelling, calms nervous system for optimal healing.
- **Mid Recovery:** it reactivates weak muscles and boosts circulation so tissues repair more effectively.
- **Later Recovery:** it helps refine movement, smooth compensations, and prevent setbacks.

In short: anytime during recovery is the right time to benefit from acupuncture.

- **Protein is non-negotiable.** It's the building block of muscle, tendon, and tissue repair. Aim for a serving with every meal and snack.
- **Color matters.** Bright berries, leafy greens, and orange vegetables bring antioxidants that calm inflammation.
- **Healing nutrients:**
 - Vitamin C + zinc → collagen production and wound repair (examples: oranges, kiwi, bell peppers, pumpkin seeds, cashews, oysters)
 - Magnesium → muscle relaxation and cramp prevention (examples: almonds, pumpkin seeds, spinach, avocado, dark chocolate)
 - Omega-3 fatty acids → reduce inflammation and support joint, tendon, and muscle recovery (examples: salmon, sardines, mackerel, chia seeds, flaxseeds, walnuts.)
- **Avoid:** Processed foods, excess sugar, and alcohol.

Your body will put those nutrients straight to work.



02

Hydration: The Overlooked Healer



If you notice fatigue, headaches, or muscle cramps, check your hydration first. Often, the simplest fixes make the biggest difference.

Even mild dehydration can slow recovery. Your tissues need fluid to repair and remodel — so make hydration a top priority

- Sip steadily through the day (not just big gulps).
- Add electrolytes if you've been sweating, training hard, or prone to cramps.
- Herbal teas and broths also count toward hydration.

General Guidelines

Baseline: ~30–35 ml of water per kg of body weight per day (≈ 0.5–1 oz per pound of body weight)

For an average adult:

- 60 kg / 132 lb → 1.8–2.1 L per day
- 70 kg / 154 lb → 2.1–2.5 L per day
- 80 kg / 176 lb → 2.4–2.8 L per day
- 90 kg / 198 lb → 2.7–3.2 L per day

03

Rest: Where The Healing Happens

Rest isn't doing nothing — it's when your body does its most important work. Deep sleep, downtime, and nervous system resets create the conditions for tissue repair, hormone balance, and immune function. Without rest, even great nutrition and movement can't do their job fully.

Sleep is your superpower. During deep sleep, growth hormone peaks and tissues repair at the cellular level. Without enough sleep, recovery slows and reinjury risk rises. Aim for 7–9 hours whenever possible. Resetting the nervous system.

Breathwork, meditation, or gentle yoga can help shift your body out of “fight-or-flight” mode and into “rest-and-repair.” The calmer your system, the more energy it can dedicate to healing.

Topical supports to manage pain and improve the healing process.

- Cold → best for new swelling and acute pain (10–15 min, first 2–3 days)
- Heat → loosens stiffness and relaxes muscles later in recovery (15–20 min)
- Hot/Cold Contrast → circulation boost (3 min heat → 1 min cold, repeat 3–4x)
- Herbal or menthol-based balms or linaments → ease tension, boost circulation, calm local inflammation

Try This: 4–6 Breath

- Sit or lie comfortably.
- Inhale gently through your nose for a slow count of 4.
- Exhale through your nose or mouth for a slow count of 6.
- Repeat for 1–3 minutes, focusing on making the exhale longer than the inhale.

Longer exhales activate your parasympathetic nervous system — the “rest-and-repair” mode that tells your body it's safe to heal.



04

Movement: Where Progress Locks In

Movement isn't just rehab — it's how you tell your body, "I'm ready to heal."

- Early days: gentle range-of-motion (ankle circles, shoulder rolls).
- As pain settles: light strengthening (glute bridges, monster walks, wall sits).
- Later on: sport-specific drills to prepare for return to play.

Too little movement slows recovery, but too much, too soon risks setbacks. Let pain be your guide. Do as much as you can without sharp pain. It's okay to work at your edge — light discomfort is often where progress happens. The goal isn't to avoid all sensation, but to avoid pushing into pain that feels threatening or unstable.

Here's where acupuncture ties in:

After injury, some muscles "switch off" while others overwork to protect the area. Acupuncture helps re-engage those inhibited muscles so movement therapy can be more effective.

Pairing acupuncture with physiotherapy, kinesiology, or strength training creates a stronger, safer path back to activity.

Acupuncture: Your Recovery Accelerator

Acupuncture goes beyond pain relief — it restores function.

When injury happens, the body doesn't always reset on its own. Some muscles tighten and shorten, while others stop firing and lose support. This imbalance often slows recovery more than the injury itself.

Acupuncture works on multiple levels. Early on, distal points support whole-body recovery by improving sleep, lowering stress, and boosting the immune system.

As treatment progresses, motor points reactivate weak muscles, while dry needling releases tight ones. Electroacupuncture enhances these effects — boosting blood flow, reducing inflammation, and retraining the nervous system for faster, more complete recovery.

The result? Less pain, stronger muscle activation, smoother movement — and often a faster recovery with a quicker return to the activities you love.

The real power comes when it's integrated with movement therapy: once tight muscles are released and weak ones re-engaged, corrective exercise locks those gains into everyday function. This combination doesn't just get you back on your feet — it helps you come back stronger and more resilient than before.

Acupuncture Helps By:

- Boosting circulation
- Calming inflammation
- Reactivating weak muscles
- Resetting the nervous system
- Reducing pain signals



What's Next?

Healing isn't a straight line.

There will be ups and downs, but every step counts.

By understanding the science, supporting your body with smart choices, and using therapies like acupuncture, you give yourself the best chance to not only recover — but to rebuild stronger than before.



If you're recovering from an injury, or want to prevent the next one — I'd love to help.

BOOK NOW

“Instant relief, Britt made a clear diagnosis at the first appointment and my one year old injury related issues were dealt with instantly.”

Happy Healing!



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About The Author

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I've been working with patients for over a decade, first as a massage therapist and now as an acupuncturist specializing in orthopedic and sports care. My practice blends hands-on techniques, acupuncture, and movement-based strategies to not only resolve pain but also improve performance and resilience.

Living and working in Whistler, I understand the drive to stay active and push limits. My mission is to help you recover smarter so you can get back to the activities you love — and come out stronger than before.

-Britt

