

REBOUND RIGHT: INJURY RECOVERY SPECIAL

THE WORLD'S #1
TRIATHLON MAGAZINE

triathlete

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"What's your secret to staying injury-free?"

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The MarcPro has been a saving grace during marathon training. It flushes out the muscles and lets me bounce back faster.

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Dark chocolate and daily mandated messages from my husband.

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My trusty inversion table. Hanging 10 minutes at the end of today allows me to move through tomorrow without grunting and groaning.

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I gave up playing soccer, which I'm not happy about. I also switched to Hoka One One shoes for my runs and that's helped my knees.

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TRID IT IT'S ELECTRIC

Rebound more quickly by turning sedentary time to active recovery with the Marc Pro **BY BEN GREENFIELD**

FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS, I've used electrical muscle stimulation (EMS) for recovery, for better blood flow during long plane and car rides, and even for strength and power workouts when I have injured joints. EMS works by delivering oxygen to muscle tissues and clearing waste through non-fatiguing contractions, speeding up the recovery process. Place the electrodes over a muscle and the device sends gentle electrical pulses into the muscle, causing them to contract.

There are two different types of EMS: the type that employs a form of electrical stimulation called static square waveforms, which use relatively high voltages and frequencies to recruit muscles. A static square waveform contracts the muscle at full power, holds it at that power, then releases the muscle fibers all at once. While this can work for recruiting many muscle fibers for a strength or power workout, it can actually be harsh or uncomfortable for injuries and recovery protocols.

The other type of EMS uses something called a dynamic decaying waveform. This waveform more comfortably contracts your muscles and then slowly releases them over a longer period of time than square waveforms. This allows muscle fibers to relax, and blood and nutrients to move in and out of muscle tissue without causing potential for cramping or fatigue.

Marc Pro is this type of EMS device that's been used for nearly 30 years by professional team sports and for medical rehabilitation, and is now used by a growing number of triathletes. The Marc Pro system includes a basic, intuitive dashboard with an intensity setting for each of the two pairs of electrodes that

connect to the unit. There is no complicated programming, setup or uncomfortable electrical signals, making this an ideal option if you're just getting started with EMS, or want something simple. You just place the electrodes on a muscle area (consult the included anatomical diagrams), and turn the dials for the desired intensity.

A typical session with the Marc Pro should last about 20–30 minutes and can be performed one or two times per day, in a relaxed or lying position. The unit retails for \$650, less than many of the square waveform EMS units. While a Marc Pro may not be appropriate or strong enough for intense muscle strength or power training, it is far more comfortable for recovery and enhancing blood flow.



For more details you can listen to an interview Greenfield conducted with the CEO of Marc Pro at Triathlete.com/mpro.



Sidestep injury by training in multiple pairs of shoes.

INJURY TIP

This allows muscle fibers to relax, and blood and nutrients to move in and out of muscle tissue without causing potential for cramping or fatigue.

SHOE SWAP

To avoid running injuries, should you stick with a single proven shoe or alternate between pairs? Running experts can stop speculating—researchers from Luxembourg have the answer.

Alternating between two or more pairs of running shoes reduced the chance of injury by 39 percent in a 2013 study of 264 recreational runners. Even alternating between two sets of the same model reduced injury risk.

Each shoe impacts a runner's stride differently, so training in various shoes can spare one body part from getting battered by the repeated stress of running by subtly redirecting the force onto different parts of the body, the research suggest.

—AARON HERSH