

# MASSAGING THE TRUTH

## Does massage improve or impair your recovery?

Effective training is not just about training hard. You also need to train smart, and training smart means you should approach recovery between training sessions with as much brain-power as developing your training program. Techniques that are believed to improve recovery include ice water baths, stretching, and light exercise; we have discussed whether there is any validity to some of these techniques in past issues of *JOPP*, and as recovery relates to rest between sets and how your gender might impact that, check out [SEX RECOVERY](#). Another technique believed to improve recovery is massage. Many massage therapists and trainers will tell you that massage will enhance muscle blood flow (see [NITRO NONSENSE](#) for new research on a popular nutritional supplement purported to enhance blood flow) and remove waste products, such as lactic acid, from your muscles. This, in turn, is supposed to enhance your recovery. However, what is often believed to be true and what actually *is* true can be completely different things. The world of training is full of beliefs that have little scientific basis. Does massage as a recovery tool fit into the realm of mere belief, or does it actually have scientific merit?

**Power Key:** massage, recovery, lactic acid, blood flow



**Using massage as a method to enhance your recovery, and thus increase your performance, is a myth squeezed to death by science.**

Photo: [Shawn Warren](#)

### Original Research

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