



## ***Dangers of Exercising Too Hard***

Excessive or prolonged periods of anaerobic training with an insufficient aerobic base can overstress various systems of the body. Our adrenal glands, are responsible for a variety of metabolic functions related to stress management. These glands respond to stress by releasing powerful hormones into the bloodstream that enable the body to function at a heightened level – a phenomenon known as the “fight or flight” response. When faced with danger or any circumstance that requires peak performance, this is a highly desirable mechanism.

However, uninterrupted stress in the form of too much anaerobic training will exhaust the adrenal glands’ ability to cope with stress. This leads to exhaustion, burnout and physical illness. When adrenal glands go from over-production to under-production of these vital hormones, a variety of healthy bodily functions begin to erode. Symptoms of overtraining and adrenal exhaustion include:

- Chronic fatigue
- Energy level and blood sugar fluctuations during the day
- Sugar cravings, particularly at night
- Mood swings
- Blurred vision
- Low resistance to illness
- Low tolerance to stress
- Poor sleep patterns
- Reduce appetite and sex drive
- Joint pain in the lower back
- Muscle aches, particularly on the inside the knee

With the high stress level inherent in modern life, it is essential to moderate the stress of exercise. The best way for riders to do this is to build an aerobic base at the beginning of every exercise season, emphasize aerobic training year-round, get plenty of rest, eat a diet of natural nutritious foods and carefully control anaerobic sessions.

Recognizing the importance of developing an aerobic foundation and balancing the application of aerobic and anaerobic exercise, the Spinning program divides training session formats into five categories called Energy Zones: Recovery, Endurance, Strength, Interval and Race Day. Following the Energy Zone guidelines will allow you to offer the appropriate training session for the prescribed exercise needs of your students.

Remember that regardless of workout format, an individual can control his effort level by monitoring heart rate during the session. The beauty of the Spinning program is that each rider has the freedom to exercise at his/her own bicycle, while still enjoying the energy and inspiration of group exercise. This is especially important during the aerobic base building period where the rider must remain below 80% of maximum heart rate for every minute of every ride.