

# Myofascial Release: The Benefits of Foam Rolling for Track and Field

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## What is **myofascial release**?

- Fancy term for soft tissue work ~ massage therapy
- Deep muscle compression or acupressure that helps to realign *fascia* & muscle fibers, alleviate pain & soreness, decrease muscle adhesions or knots, increase blood flow, cause your nerves to relax
  - Shoelace analogy
- Has been shown to improve recovery & regeneration, decrease the risk of certain injuries by maintaining/encouraging muscle balance
  - E.g. overactive & tight hip flexors inhibit proper glute activation
- Feels great!

There are several different types of myofascial release:

- Massage therapy
- **Self-myofascial release**
  - **Foam rollers**
  - Unconventional methods: massage sticks, tennis balls, etc.

When to use self-myofascial release (foam rolling)

- Anytime! It's hard to overdo it.
- Before the warm-up...a warm-up for the warm-up
- During cool-down
  - Before static stretching...remember the shoelace analogy!
- Active recovery workouts
- When the athlete is sore

Technique

- Choose a roller that is appropriate for the athlete's ability...firm vs. soft
- Spend 5-10 minutes covering all major muscle groups, ~10+ strokes per muscle group, or roll until the pain disappears
- Roll the entire length of the muscle, targeting the tight or sore spots
- Build your tolerance over time

Important muscle groups to target for the track & field athlete

- All muscles that attach to/cross hips:
  - Hip rotators/stabilizers—glutes, IT Band, TFL, adductors
  - Quadriceps & Hamstrings
  - Hip flexors
- Calves & shins
- Upper back, shoulders, lats
  - Tennis balls may be more effective for smaller areas

Videos of all muscles groups found at [www.dahlmanelite.com](http://www.dahlmanelite.com)...

Hip rotators/glutes



IT Band/TFL



Adductors (Inner thigh)



Quadriceps/Hip flexors



Hamstrings



Calves

