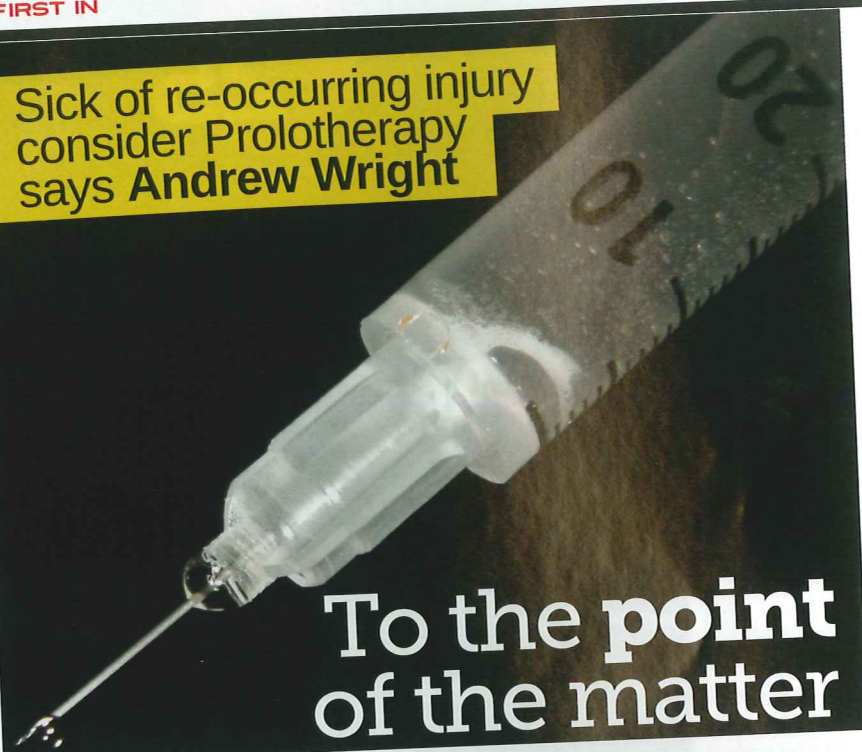




Sick of re-occurring injury consider Prolotherapy says Andrew Wright



## To the point of the matter

**H**AVE YOU EVER been injured spent thousands of dollars trying to fix it, but have gotten nowhere? Then you are probably in the same boat as many athletes and it is the most frustrating thing in the world. It is even more frustrating when you are a professional and your monthly income is based on funding and prize money. In fact this is the situation I have been in over the past few years which has forced me off of the racing scene.

Since so many articles cover injury prevention, and since over 70% of triathletes are carrying some sort of injury I thought rehabilitation might be a little more interesting. I am sure you have all been to the physio and got some sort of exercise program, if that did not work maybe a cortisone shot, and if that didn't work possibly surgery? All of the above works in its own way or in many cases not at all. I fall into this category and pretty much gave up hope and stopped exercising all together.

That was until I read about something called prolotherapy and saw a study using rugby players with chronic groin injuries. After a rest period, and a gentle reintroduction to exercise failed, prolotherapy injections were administered. Results showed that after an average of 3 sessions, 20 of the 24 players had no pain. Seemed like a very high success rate so I decided to give it a try. These were the questions I asked before going ahead?

**1. What is the difference between prolotherapy and cortisone?** Cortisone injections are strong anti inflammatories that reduce pain short term but can weaken ligaments/tendons and disrupt the natural healing process. Prolotherapy on the other hand stimulates the healing process by enhancing blood flow to the area and can strengthen the tendons. It is made up of a herbal sugar solution that is thought to dehydrate the injected tissue, initiating healing.

**2. How many sessions are needed?** Cortisone is usually done as a one off and can feel like it has helped short term. However, in my experience the pain came back again after two months. Prolotherapy is usually done over a 5-week period but can be repeated over long periods of time.

**So does prolotherapy work?** Since the treatment is not that mainstream, especially in Asia, there is not a huge amount of research available, however it seems to be quite widely used for the treatment of injuries and chronic pain. Keep in mind that many physios and doctors have only recently accepted treatments such as acupuncture although the treatment method has been used for hundreds of years. The main advantage of this therapy is that it is not harmful to the body and therefore a great treatment to have done before turning to Cortisone or surgery. As I write this article I have had my third injection in my Achilles and groin and have actually started a bit of gentle exercise without too much discomfort. **TMA**



Expert advise with Andrew Wright Triathlete and trainer [www.tribalsport.hk](http://www.tribalsport.hk)

# When LESS is more

New research show that the traditional warm-up may be too much

**WE ALL KNOW** that it is essential warm up before undertaking any strenuous exercise whether it be training or racing. Warming up raises muscle temperature, accelerates oxygen uptake and increases anaerobic metabolism, thus enhancing performance. But how much and at what intensity has always been the key question.

Traditionally longer warm ups have been the norm, but a new study released in June this year, in the Journal of Applied Physiology. Conducted by Elias Knapik and Brian R. MacIntosh from the University of Calgary Human Performance Laboratory, Alberta, Canada have found evidence indicating that less is more.

The study compared the effects of a traditional, intense warm-up with the shorter, less strenuous one, on the performance of 10 highly trained cyclists. They found that shorter warm-up produced less muscle fatigue yet more peak power.

Traditional, longer warm-ups have been thought to offer athletes an edge by promoting a process called Post-Activation Potentiation (PAP). In PAP, brief bouts of strenuous physical activity produce biochemical change in the muscles that enhances muscle response, that can last from five to ten minutes, long enough to build up that unbeatable lead.

In the study, the cyclists participated in two warm-ups. A longer, traditional warm-up beginning with 20 minutes of cycling gradually increasing in intensity, until the cyclists reached 95 percent of their maximum heart rate, followed by four shorter warm-ups at 8-minute intervals. The entire warm-up lasted approximately 50 minutes compared to the shorter, experimental warm-up including