

LALICIC METHOD

— FREE GUIDE — RECOVERY & LONGEVITY

THE LONGEVITY PROTOCOL.

What actually helps you recover, train longer, and stay healthy — sorted honestly by how strong the evidence is. Start at the top. Most people are missing the basics while chasing the extras.

11 PAGES

FREE GUIDE

3 TIERS

BY EVIDENCE

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COACH

— READ THIS FIRST

NOT EVERYTHING WORKS EQUALLY.

The recovery industry sells everything with the same confidence — the sleep advice and the \$400 gadget get the same breathless pitch. That's not honest, and it's not useful. This guide sorts everything into three tiers based on how strong the evidence actually is, so you spend your time and money in the right order.

TIER 1

FOUNDATION

Strong evidence. These produce the overwhelming majority of the benefit. If any of these are missing, fix them before anything else.

TIER 2

WELL SUPPORTED

Good evidence, real but smaller effects. Worth adding once Tier 1 is genuinely consistent.

TIER 3

OPTIONAL

Limited or mixed evidence. Low risk, low cost. Try them if you want — just don't expect them to replace Tier 1.

THE RULE THAT MATTERS MOST

You cannot supplement, sauna, or gadget your way out of poor sleep and too much training. Every year I watch athletes buy the recovery tech while sleeping six hours and never deloading. Fix the foundation. The rest is refinement — genuinely useful refinement, but refinement.

THIS IS GENERAL GUIDANCE

Nothing here is medical advice. If you have a medical condition, are pregnant, take medication, or have any cardiovascular concern, speak to your doctor before starting sauna protocols, cold exposure, or significant changes to training or sleep.

SLEEP.

EVIDENCE: STRONG

Nothing else in this document comes close. Sleep is when adaptation happens — the training only becomes strength while you're unconscious. Short sleep is consistently associated with worse performance, slower recovery, and higher injury risk in athletes.

DO THIS

Aim for 7–9 hours. Athletes in heavy training often need the upper end.

Keep a consistent schedule. Same bed and wake time, including weekends — regularity matters nearly as much as duration.

Cool, dark, quiet. A cooler room helps most people fall asleep faster.

Caffeine cut-off 8–10 hours before bed. Caffeine's half-life is long; an afternoon coffee is still in your system at midnight.

Alcohol wrecks sleep quality even when it helps you fall asleep. It suppresses the deep stages you actually need.

IF YOU ONLY CHANGE ONE THING

Fix your wake time first, not your bedtime. A consistent wake time anchors the whole rhythm, and bedtime tends to follow on its own within a week or two.

NAPPING

A 20–30 minute nap is genuinely useful when night sleep is short — common in athletes with evening fixtures. Keep it before mid-afternoon and under 30 minutes, or it starts eating into that night's sleep.

DELOADING.

EVIDENCE: STRONG

The most under-used recovery tool in the gym, because it feels like doing less. You get fitter during recovery, not during the session — the session is the stimulus, the recovery is where the adaptation happens. Training hard without planned reductions eventually stops producing progress and starts producing injuries.

HOW TO DELOAD

Every 4th week in a structured block, or whenever fatigue markers stack up.

Keep the same exercises and the same days. Familiarity matters.

Cut sets by roughly half. Keep load moderate — around 70% of recent working weights.

Stop every set well short. 4–5 reps in reserve.

It is not a week off. You still train. You just stop accumulating fatigue.

SIGNS YOU NEED ONE EARLY

Resting heart rate climbing week over week. Sleep getting worse despite no schedule change. Losing motivation to train. Joints aching before sessions rather than after. Weights that felt easy last month feeling heavy now. Any two together — deload this week, not next month.

FOR ATHLETES IN SEASON

Your matches are the load. In a congested fixture period the gym's only job is to stop you losing qualities — cut volume hard and keep intensity. Adding training volume during a heavy fixture run is how athletes arrive flat when it matters.

POST-MATCH RECOVERY.

EVIDENCE: STRONG FOR THE BASICS

The 24 hours after competition set up the next week. Most of what matters here is unglamorous — food, fluid, sleep, and easy movement — and it outperforms every recovery product on the market.

WINDOW	PRIORITY	WHAT TO ACTUALLY DO
0–2 hours	Refuel & rehydrate	Carbohydrate and protein together. Drink to thirst plus a bit more — weigh yourself before and after if you sweat heavily.
2–6 hours	Down-regulate	A proper meal. Get off your feet. Dim lights in the evening — post-match adrenaline makes sleep hard, and that's the real cost of a late fixture.
That night	Sleep	The single highest-value recovery action available. Protect it even if it means a later start the next day.
Next day	Move easy	20–30 minutes of walking, easy cycling, or light mobility. Blood flow without adding load. Better than complete rest for most athletes.
48 hours	Return to load	Short heavy gym session if scheduled. Intensity high, volume low.

ON ICE BATHS AFTER TRAINING

Worth knowing: regular cold-water immersion straight after strength training may blunt some of the muscle and strength adaptations you trained for. For recovery between matches in a congested week, it can help you feel better faster. During a strength-building block, don't use it routinely right after lifting.

FOOD, WATER, AND WALKING.

EVIDENCE: STRONG

PROTEIN

The most reliable dietary lever for recovery and body composition. Include a solid protein source in every main meal. Most people under-eat it at breakfast — that's usually the easiest fix.

EAT ENOUGH

Chronic under-eating while training hard is one of the fastest routes to poor recovery, illness, and stalled progress. If you're in a fat-loss phase, keep the deficit small.

HYDRATION

Drink to thirst across the day and top up around training. Pale-straw urine is a decent rough indicator. There's no need to force litres beyond thirst.

DAILY STEPS

Low-intensity movement on non-training days aids recovery, supports cardiovascular health, and adds energy expenditure without competing with your training. Walking is genuinely underrated.

SUPPLEMENTS — THE SHORT, HONEST VERSION

Creatine monohydrate and **adequate protein** have the strongest evidence for what you're doing. Vitamin D if you're deficient — get tested rather than guessing. Almost everything else is optional and secondary to sleeping, eating, and turning up consistently. Nothing in a tub compensates for a missed week.

SAUNA & HEAT EXPOSURE.

EVIDENCE: MODERATE TO GOOD

One of the better-supported additions here. Regular sauna use is associated with cardiovascular benefits in long-running population research, and it's widely used by athletes for relaxation and perceived recovery. The cardiovascular association comes largely from observational studies — strong signal, but not the same as proof of cause.

A REASONABLE PROTOCOL

15–20 minutes at a temperature you can tolerate comfortably.

2–4 sessions per week. Frequency appears to matter more than heroic single sessions.

After training, not before. Heat before a session will hurt performance.

Rehydrate properly afterwards. You lose meaningful fluid.

Build up gradually if you're new to it — start shorter and cooler.

SAFETY — READ THIS

Do not use sauna if you're dehydrated, have been drinking alcohol, or immediately after a maximal session with heavy fluid loss. If you have any cardiovascular condition, low blood pressure, are pregnant, or take medication that affects heart rate or blood pressure, check with your doctor first. Leave immediately if you feel dizzy or unwell — pushing through heat stress is genuinely dangerous.

COLD EXPOSURE

Popular and mostly harmless, and many people find it improves mood and alertness. Just remember the timing caveat from the previous page: routine cold straight after strength training may reduce the adaptations you're chasing.

HRV & WEARABLES.

EVIDENCE: USEFUL AS A TREND, WIDELY OVER-INTERPRETED

Devices like Whoop, Oura and Garmin measure heart rate variability as a proxy for recovery. The underlying measure is real and has genuine research behind it. The problem is how people use it — treating a single morning score as a verdict on the day, when HRV varies enormously between individuals and bounces around for reasons that have nothing to do with training.

USE IT PROPERLY

Watch trends, not days. A single low reading means almost nothing. A downward trend across 5–7 days is a real signal.

Compare yourself only to yourself. Absolute HRV values differ hugely between people and comparing scores with a teammate is meaningless.

Measure consistently. Same conditions each morning, or the numbers aren't comparable.

Never let it override how you feel. If the app says "recovered" and you feel wrecked, you're wrecked.

THE FAILURE MODE TO AVOID

Some people become anxious about their scores, which worsens sleep, which worsens the scores. If you notice you're checking the app before you've noticed how you feel, take it off for two weeks. A recovery tool that costs you sleep is a net loss.

A FREE ALTERNATIVE THAT WORKS

Morning resting heart rate, taken the same way each day, plus a 1–10 note on sleep, soreness, and mood. Thirty seconds. For most people this captures the majority of what an expensive wearable tells them — and the jump test on page 10 beats both for training readiness.

LIGHT, NATURE, AND THE EXTRAS.

MORNING DAYLIGHT · TIER 2 · MODERATE EVIDENCE

Getting outside within an hour or so of waking helps anchor your circadian rhythm, which supports sleep timing. 10–20 minutes is plenty, and it doesn't need to be sunny. This is one of the cheapest, most reliable interventions on the list — and it does the job people buy expensive lamps for.

TIME OUTDOORS · TIER 2 · MODERATE EVIDENCE

Time in green space is consistently associated with lower stress and better mood. Whether that's the nature itself, the movement, the daylight, or the absence of a screen is hard to separate — but it costs nothing and the downside is zero.

BLUE-LIGHT BLOCKING GLASSES · TIER 3 · LIMITED / MIXED EVIDENCE

The theory is sound — evening light exposure affects melatonin. The evidence that the glasses specifically improve sleep is mixed and generally weak. What consistently works better: dim the lights in the last hour, put the phone down, and keep the bedroom dark. If you like the glasses and they cue your wind-down routine, there's no harm in wearing them. Just don't expect them to fix a 1am scrolling habit.

GROUNDING / EARTHING · TIER 3 · VERY LIMITED EVIDENCE

Walking barefoot on grass or sand. The proposed mechanisms are not well supported, and the studies are small and generally low quality. That said — barefoot walking outdoors gets you daylight, movement, time in nature, and a break from screens, all of which do have support. If you enjoy it, do it. Just understand you're likely benefiting from those things rather than from the ground itself.

WHY I'M TELLING YOU THIS

I could sell all of this with equal confidence and you'd probably never know. But the point of training with structure is spending effort where it actually returns something. Being honest about what's uncertain is the same principle applied to recovery.

A REALISTIC WEEK.

You don't need to do everything. This is what a well-recovered week actually looks like for someone training seriously — foundation first, extras layered on where they fit.

WHEN	NON-NEGOTIABLE	IF YOU HAVE TIME
Every morning	Consistent wake time · protein at breakfast	10–20 min daylight outdoors · resting HR check
Training days	Fuel before · protein after · sleep 7–9h	Sauna after the session · easy walk in the evening
Rest days	Walk 20–30 min · eat normally, don't under-eat	Longer time outdoors · mobility work
Every evening	Dim lights last hour · caffeine cut-off respected	Screens away 30 min before bed
Every 4th week	Planned deload — half the sets, 70% load	Re-check your tracked numbers
After matches	Refuel within 2h · protect that night's sleep	Easy movement next day · sauna 48h later

THE JUMP TEST — FREE, 30 SECONDS, BETTER THAN MOST APPS

Do three countermovement jumps, hands on hips, and note your best height. Same time, twice a week. If it's down more than about 10% from your normal for several days running, you're fatigued — cut volume that week. It's the single most useful readiness measure available to an athlete without a lab.

START WITH ONE THING

Don't overhaul everything on Monday. Pick the weakest item in Tier 1 — for most people it's sleep consistency or deloading — and fix only that for a month. Then add the next. Recovery habits fail the same way training programs do: too much change at once.

— WHERE TO GO NEXT

RECOVERY SUPPORTS TRAINING.

All of this exists to let you train harder, more consistently, for more years. It isn't a substitute for a structured program — it's what makes one work. If your training is still guesswork, that's the higher-leverage thing to fix first.

THE PROGRAMS

Start Boost — 4-week beginner on-ramp. Learn the patterns, build the habit.

Advance — 12-week periodised progression with autoregulation.

Ladies Program — 8-week strength and composition block.

Athlete Performance — pre-season, in-season, and enhancement blocks.

Free previews of all four at lalicicmethod.com.

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This guide is general information, not medical advice. It does not diagnose or treat any condition. Consult a qualified physician before beginning new training, sauna or cold protocols, or making significant changes to sleep or nutrition — particularly if you have a medical condition, are pregnant, or take medication. Evidence ratings reflect the general state of research at the time of writing and are simplified for a general audience.