

Can Beer Help Your Workout?

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Could Beer Actually Become The Next Big Recovery Drink?



[Amy Schlinger](#)

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Disclosure: This article was inspired by an all-expenses paid press trip on which the author was hosted by Michelob ULTRA and participated in the brand's Summer Series events in Miami and New York.

Think about the last 5K race you ran. What about the last long group road ride you went for? Did it end with a beer? Actually, if you've participated in an obstacle course race like Spartan or Tough Mudder, chances are you couldn't wait to cross the finish line and redeem the ticket you were given for your free brew.

Yes, beer and races, runs, and other lengthy physical activities like hiking do have a relationship. Even barbell-thumping CrossFitters are known to “recover” after a hard workout with a cold one.

It’s not exactly a connection you’d think of. You’re working out to get in shape while pounding down beers can often hinder that. But after a long morning of surfing, cracking open a beer seems like a great idea and one you shouldn’t don’t feel bad about. After all, with all the work you put in, you deserve it and a beer or two (or three) won’t undo what you accomplished.

ADVERTISING

For years scientists have studied the effects of beer or alcohol on workouts. So while we know beer may not exactly help you build your rock-hard six-pack – studies have shown that alcohol does in fact slow the recovery process — it does serve as both a motivator and a reward. A beer has always been a great way to celebrate but also there’s the social component that matches the surge in group fitness activities.

“Think about crushing a workout or completing a race—you and your friends have just done something difficult and are feeling proud of yourselves,” says [Adam Rosante](#), celebrity trainer and nutrition coach in New York City. “It makes sense then that, if you drink, you’d want to raise a glass.”

And beer companies are noticing the relationship as well.

“I think we’ve seen people living this active lifestyle and prioritizing their physical health and well being, but really still wanting to enjoy themselves,” says Joe Lennon, senior director for beer brand [Michelob ULTRA](#) . “And so it’s not just about active, active, active all the time, but it’s also about social enjoyment and having a few beers with friends.”

This notion inspired the idea behind the brand’s [Summer Series](#) — a national sweepstakes that gave consumers the chance to participate in three exclusive active events throughout the summer. The events included paddle boarding along the coast in [Miami](#) in June, a run on the evening when the sunset aligned perfectly with the street grid in [New York City](#) in July and a beach cliff rock climb at [Point Dume in Malibu, California](#) in August. Each experience ended with an after party, which, of course, involved the brand’s 95-calorie beer, Michelob ULTRA.

“This is where Michelob ULTRA can play a great role, with the fewer carbs and fewer calories in it,” says Lennon (just 2.6 grams of carbs per beer to be exact). “It fits this lifestyle because it doesn’t undo all the work that the consumer puts in living actively.”

While the summer series was a new initiative for the brand, they’ve been involved with other sports and fitness initiatives, activating over 100 running, golfing and cycling events every year.

“We’re partnered with the [PGA Tour](#) , the [Rock n Roll marathon series](#) , the [TriRock triathlon series](#) in San Diego, [Life Time Tri Series](#), as well as the [AMGEN Tour of California](#) on the cycling side,” says Lennon. “At the end of all of those races, we have an event space for both the participants and spectators to come have have a cold beer.”

Chances are the trend will only continue, with both Michelob and other beer brands playing a larger and more visible role in the fitness world, thanks to the growing acceptance from consumers that beer can be a part of an active and balanced lifestyle. The key is just about moderation and drinking responsibly.

“People are realizing more and more that a commitment to strength and fitness enhances their overall enjoyment of life, and I personally believe that true health is balance,” says Rosante. “Beer and fitness are like chocolate and peanut butter—two great tastes that taste even better together.”