HYROX HELP
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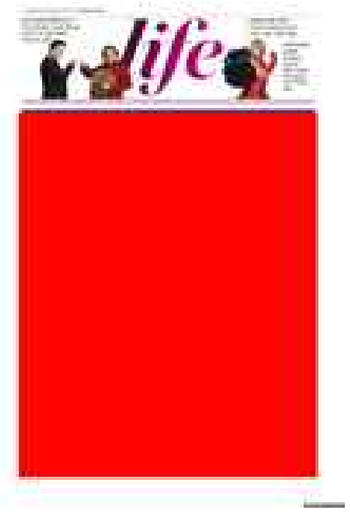

HYROX HELP

As the fitness race gains popularity in Singapore, here are expert tips on how to avoid injuries

Hyrox's popularity in Singapore has surged in just three years. The fitness race, which comprises an 8km run and eight fitness stations, attracted 10,395 sign-ups for its latest race in November. PHOTO: HYROX SINGAPORE

Stephanie Yeo
Senior Correspondent

When Hyrox debuted in Singapore in October 2023, Ms Vishalini Rajandran was among the 3,500 who took part in the fitness race. She competed in the women's relay with three friends from her gym.

"We were curious about the experience. It's a gauge of how your fitness has been improving," says Ms Vishalini, 40. She has since completed the women's doubles category in Singapore in June 2024, and the mixed doubles in Bangkok in May.

Hyrox athletes run 1km eight times and, in between, take on eight functional workout stations – 1,000m on a SkiErg machine, a 50m sled push, a 50m sled pull, 80m of burpee broad jumps, a 1,000m row, 200m farmer's carry, 100m of sandbag lunges and 100 wall balls. The weights they use vary according to the categories.

Participants aged 16 to 89 can race in the singles, doubles and relay categories. The pro category is for more advanced athletes, while the adaptive category is for those with physical or neurological disabilities.

Hyrox's popularity here has surged in just three years. There were 12,840 athletes competing in the AIA Hyrox Open Asian Championships 2025 in June and 10,395 in the AIA Hyrox Singapore race in November.

That, in turn, has resulted in more Hyrox-related injuries, say medical and wellness experts.

Dr Ong Joo Haw, a sports medicine physician from Orthopaedics International at Mount Elizabeth Hospital, sees one to two such cases a week.

"Since Hyrox became popular, I have seen an uptick in Hyrox-related injuries, largely owing to increased participation rates. This is especially common among beginner athletes participating in relay events and from related training, such as at fitness classes," says Dr Ong, a competitive powerlifter.

Mr Kavan Chen, clinical lead, senior physiotherapist and personal trainer at UFIT, says each of its nine physiotherapists sees an average of two to three cases related to Hyrox every month. His colleague, UFIT's head of podiatry Lewis Nurney, says he and his fellow podiatrist treat eight to 10 Hyrox-related injuries monthly.

UFIT, a home-grown fitness brand, is an official Hyrox training club that offers holistic health and fitness services, from physiotherapy to nutrition consultations.

Hyrox's high-intensity, repetitive and hybrid nature – combining running and functional strength – can lead to specific injuries in fitness enthusiasts who do not pace their preparation well, overuse their muscles or have poor form, Dr Ong says. These commonly affect the knees, lower back, shoulders and feet.

Here is how to prepare better for your next race, while preventing injuries or managing existing ones.

WHICH CATEGORY SHOULD I SIGN UP FOR?

"Hyrox is designed to be accessible to all fitness levels, but that doesn't mean it's easy," Dr Ong says.

In the relay category, each of the four participants must finish their two stations independently, as well as 2km of the running distance. Doubles is harder, with both partners running the full 8km each and taking turns to complete each fitness station. Athletes in the singles category take on the full run and all stations.

Dr Toon Dong Hao is an orthopaedic surgeon from HC Orthopaedic Surgery at Gleneagles Hospital and a Hyrox alumnus. He says that first-timers who do not have a good base of cardiovascular endurance or have never done wall balls or SkiErgs should start with a relay race.

He recommends Hyrox's online tool (str.sg/x4wj) or visiting one of the Hyrox training centres in Singapore (str.sg/bQem), which offer a Hyrox Physical Fitness Test that is a condensed version of the race, to find the correct category for one's fitness level.

Orthopaedic sports surgeon Derrick Guo advises athletes to be screened for existing musculoskeletal injuries, like those to the rotator cuff, knees, lower back or Achilles tendon, as well as uncontrolled medical conditions, such as those involving the heart or asthma. Doing so will help them manage such issues better in their training, says Dr Guo, a consultant at public healthcare institution Woodlands Health.

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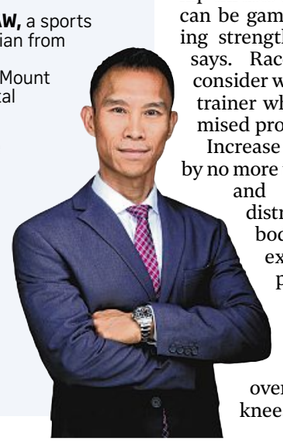

Sports medicine physician Ong Joo Haw sees one to two Hyrox-related injuries a week, especially among beginners. PHOTO: MOUNT ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

HOW SHOULD I TRAIN?

Many gyms now offer Hyrox-related training programmes over eight to 12 weeks.

But besides building strength, experts say beginners should focus on running. "Regardless of experience level, I strongly recommend beginners to start training for their run early, as 50 per cent of Hyrox is compromised running – running under a state of fatigue after each workout. Building resilience in this area can make a significant difference in overall performance," says Dr Toon.

Mr Shawn Lin, fitness team lead at fitness chain TFX, which has three branches, says athletes should aim to run two to three times a week and include two hybrid or strength training sessions that mix running with functional movements.

"Foundational exercises such as split squats, Romanian deadlifts, hip thrusts and core stability drills can be game changers in improving strength and endurance," he says. Race newbies can also consider working with a personal trainer who will design a customised programme.

Increase your training volume by no more than 10 per cent a week and vary exercises to distribute stress on the body, says Dr Guo. Hyrox exercises, such as sled pushes and pulls, lunges and wall balls, should be supervised to make sure your technique does not over-strain shoulders and knees.

Race simulations can also be useful, Mr Lin says. He suggests starting with a half simulation of, say, four rounds of 1km runs with one Hyrox station, three to four weeks before race day. The effort should feel like a six or seven out of 10.

"Track your pace, heart rate and how each station feels, and refine your technique and adjust your targets accordingly," he says.

Around 10 to 14 days before the big day, do a full simulation at an effort level of about seven or eight out of 10. Include your planned fuelling and recovery breaks, so you can mimic the actual race. But remember to give yourself up to 72 hours of lighter training after this as a recovery phase, he adds.

Exercise aside, proper nutrition as well as adequate sleep and recovery can make a difference to race performance.

"The training is tough, but it's often the easiest part of the race. The nutrition and recovery aspects of Hyrox training are what people tend to neglect," says Mr Marco Langley, fitness lead and personal trainer at UFIT.

"Recovery becomes even more crucial as training intensity ramps up and race day gets closer."

This means post-training meals that have a sensible balance of protein and carbohydrates – up to 50 per cent carbohydrates, 30 per cent protein and 20 per cent fat, as the intensity ramps up – and at least seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

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