

## What will give you “The Edge” during your next sport season?

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Do you need an “edge” to be a little faster, a little stronger or more explosive? Do you need an “edge” to make first string, make the team cut or to be considered for a college scholarship? Now that spring is here and summer is approaching, many sports enter the “off-season”. Your coach or trainer will most likely encourage both male and female athletes to participate in an off-season training program. Training during this time is crucial and absolutely necessary for continued development. If you want an “edge”, your off-season training program should include the following components:

**Agility and Footwork:** This is the ability to change direction quickly. Agility permits an athlete to react to a stimulus, start quickly and efficiently, move in the correct direction and be ready to change direction or stop quickly to make a play in a fast, smooth, efficient and repeatable manner.

**Strength and Power Training:** Big biceps may look great at the beach, but arm curls may not be the best exercise to help you excel in your particular sport. Strength is the ability to produce force. Force is related to the ability to accelerate an object. Each sport uses specific movements and muscle groups that need increased strength and power to improve performance. Make sure your weight training program includes both power lifts and sport-specific movements.

**Speed Development:** Speed is increased by how fast a certain distance can be covered. Depending upon your sport, the movement is linear or lateral, forward or backward, changes directions or remains straight. Your off-season training program must include speed training, plyometrics and sport-specific drills to increase your ability to move and react.

**Injury Rehab and Prevention:** If you are injured, you can't play your sport; - you can't score, improve your time or help your team win. If you have an old or current injury keeping you from your full potential, see your trainer, team physician or a physical therapist. The off-season is a great time to fully rehabilitate your injury and get ready for the upcoming season.

Follow these guidelines for a successful, injury-free season and have an “edge”!