



Q Are there any recovery benefits from raising the legs above the head to assist in blood flow? I am old enough to remember Rudi Altig (World Road Champion in 1966), who was a great advocate of this method of recovery. After a race he used to rest on his shoulders and forearms, feet in the air. Is there any merit to this procedure?

Barrie Bentley

There is indeed benefit from resting with one's legs elevated after exercise. Rudi Altig's position is a yoga pose called Viparita Karani. Devotees believe that it reduces stress and anxiety, as well as helping the circulation and relieving fatigued muscles. In physiological terms it helps drain fluid from the legs back to the heart, which in turn slows the pulse and lowers blood pressure.

Practising this yoga position was a trick Rudi Altig perfected at track racing events – as was walking on his hands. It clearly did him no harm! There are many benefits to cyclists of practising yoga.

To get into position it is easiest to sit sideways close to a wall on a comfortable surface. Lie back and lift both legs while rotating to face the wall. Your bottom should be as close to the wall as possible. (If this is easy, you could walk up the wall into a shoulder stand.) You should be relaxed and comfortable, with no strain, and able to hold the position for many minutes.

Dr Kate Brodie

Meet the experts



Dr Kate Brodie
Retired GP
HEALTH



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TECHNICAL



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LEGAL

Q I ride a Willier Lavaredo with Campagnolo Centaur 10-speed shifters, a Campag Xenon 50-34 chainset and a Miche 11-25 cassette. Hills are killing me. What is the lowest-geared cassette this setup can take? I would like to keep as much of the existing kit as possible but will replace the rear mech as well if I have to.

ipaul321, on the Cycling UK Forum



Fit a Wolf Tooth RoadLink between the frame and rear mech. Although optimised for Shimano, they work well with both Campagnolo and SRAM derailleurs and enable you to use a rear sprocket with up to 34 teeth, even with a short-cage road rear mech. The only significant drawback is that chain wrap capacity is unaltered, so you may find you can't use the inner chainring with some of the smaller rear sprockets or the chain will hang loose.

Richard Hallett

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