THE SURGEON'S EDGE BY THE NUMBERS



EVIDENCE-BASED STATISTICS ON WHY MICRO-RECOVERY MATTERS

The science is clear: taking care of your body and nervous system improves your health, longevity, and performance.

SURGEON WELL-BEING: THE REALITY

40–50%
of surgeons meet criteria for burnout.

Recent reviews place overall surgeon burnout around 41–47%.[1]

2x
Surgeons are nearly twice as likely to experience burnout compared to the general working population.[1]

30–40%
of surgeons report symptoms of depression.[1]



1 in 4
surgeons has considered leaving medicine due to burnout.[1]



60+
hours per week is the norm for many surgeons, increasing risk for exhaustion and errors.[2]

THE PHYSICAL TOLL OF SURGERY

79–88%
of experienced surgeons report musculoskeletal pain related to operating.[3]



MOST COMMON AREAS OF PAIN REPORTED:

- 68% Lower back
- 57% Neck
- 46% Shoulders
- 33% Upper back
- 30% Wrists/Hands

2/3
of surgeons report increased neck pain after operating.[4]



1/4
report clinically significant neck or lower back pain.[4]



PROLONGED STATIC POSTURE UNDER LOAD CONTRIBUTES TO:

- ✓ Muscle fatigue
- ✓ Reduced circulation
- ✓ Joint compression
- ✓ Chronic pain
- ✓ Decreased career longevity

STRESS, BRAIN FUNCTION & PERFORMANCE

Chronic stress impacts the brain regions responsible for:



- Attention
- Working memory
- Emotional regulation
- Decision-making
- Problem solking

23%
Higher levels of emotional exhaustion are associated with a 23% increase in medical errors.[5]

54%
of surgeons report that stress negatively affects their focus and concentration.[6]

THE GOAL ISN'T TO ELIMINATE STRESS—IT'S TO RECOVER BETTER.

Improving recovery between periods of activation helps maintain performance, precision, and emotional resilience.



THE POWER OF BREATHING & MICRO-RECOVERY

5 MINUTES CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

A Stanford Medicine study found that just 5 minutes per day of structured breathing exercises significantly improved mood and reduced anxiety. The greatest benefit came from an exhale-focused technique called cyclic sighing (physiological sighing).[7]



PHYSIOLOGICAL SIGH (10–15 SECONDS)



Small second inhale → Long exhale

Research shows this technique produces greater improvements in mood and reductions in physiological arousal than mindfulness meditation.[7]

MICRO-RECOVERY PAYS OFF

Brief recovery practices throughout the day can:

- ✓ Lower stress hormones
- ✓ Reduce muscle tension
- ✓ Improve mental clarity
- ✓ Enhance focus and precision
- ✓ Support long-term health and career longevity



2 MINUTES

of intentional recovery between cases can improve alertness and reduce fatigue accumulation.[3]



INVEST IN RECOVERY. PROTECT YOUR PERFORMANCE.

Your body is your most important instrument.
Micro-recovery is not a luxury—it's a performance strategy.

Healthier You + Sharper Mind + Stronger Resilience = Better Outcomes for Your Patients & Your Career

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Always consult with your healthcare provider for personalized advice.

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