

A Surgeon Explained the Upside of Conor McGregor's Blood Flow Restriction Training

Dr. David Abbasi shares why this kind of therapy will be especially useful as the fighter recovers from breaking his leg at UFC 264.

MMA fighter Conor McGregor has been [sharing regular updates](#) about his recovery since [breaking his leg during his rematch against Dustin Poirier at UFC 264](#). In one of his most recent posts, McGregor revealed that he is back training on an exercise bike, less than 6 weeks after undergoing surgery to insert an intramedullary rod into his tibia.

It's clearly visible in the video that McGregor is wearing a sort of tourniquet on each of his legs—a sign that he is using [blood flow restriction training](#) as part of his rehab. Originally the remit of hardcore bodybuilders, blood flow restriction training has become increasingly popular among athletes and celebrities in the last decade. It is based on the principle that restricting the flow of blood leads to lactic acid buildup and muscle fatigue, which in turn lead to the body growing stronger muscles.

In a new video on his YouTube channel, orthopedic sports surgeon [Dr. David Abbasi](#) explains why blood flow restriction training could actually turn out to be McGregor's "secret weapon."

"The goal of this BFR therapy is that as it inflates these tourniquets on both of his thighs, it creates an environment where it restricts the blood flow coming back from the leg," he says. "The lower oxygen creates a physiological stress which makes the muscle work much harder, even though it's a lower weight, and therefore can cause muscle hypertrophy." He adds that this can also trigger the release of anabolic hormones, including growth hormones.

"After an operation like that, [McGregor] had restricted weight bearing where he's not allowed to place all of his weight on his leg at once, so with these techniques such as blood flow restriction therapy, it can allow us to start doing exercises with much lower weight, but have the same results, because it's taxing the physiology of the muscles much more."