

How do pro athletes recover so quickly?

By Amanda MacMillan, Outside

Lindsey Vonn made history last month with her 64th World Cup win—the most ever for a female skier—after spending most of 2014 rehabbing a torn ACL. Even more remarkable: she had not one but two major knee surgeries in the past two years.

Many people who tear their ACLs are told it can take at least a full year, post-surgery, to get 100 percent of their strength and function back. For them, Vonn's return to the slopes, just 10 months after her second operation, may have seemed a bit hasty.

So what is it about the pros? Do they recover more quickly because they're better athletes, or because they get better care? According to John Xerogeanes, M.D., chief of sports medicine and professor of orthopedic surgery at Emory University Hospital, it's usually a bit of both.

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