Recovery Discovery

Right after a long bike ride, all I feel like doing is collapsing with an ice-cold beverage in hand. It seems like a bad idea, but here’s a quick summary on why that may not be the case!

Passive Recovery
Passive recovery is when you stop all movement after exercise to relax and breathe. The idea is that by not moving, you’re “freeing” energy and oxygen, which goes to help your muscles recover. It works well for regenerating your fast power sources—so it’s good for those in-between times when you’re doing sprints.

Included in this category: Ice baths, massage, specific body positions, consuming cold liquids

Active Recovery
Generally known as “cooling down”, this involves exercising at a much lower intensity once you stop your main workout. This decreases muscle cramps and stiffness and facilitates overall muscle recovery by keeping the blood and nutrients flowing. You spend a small amount of energy, but you speed up the replenishment of your muscles.

Included in this category: walking or jogging, stretching, spinning on a cycle, lifting much lighter weights, swimming

Bottom Line: Active recovery will help lessen soreness afterwards, so for almost all types of exercise it’s best to try and at least “walk it off” right away. Listen to your body and choose the intensity of recovery that feels right for you.

In the 24 hours that follows exercise, do a mix of passive and active recovery techniques.

Images: http://www.enjoyyourhealthylife.com/2012/08/31/recovery-from-a-half-ironman-triathlon/
http://blog.mioglobal.com/category/mio-experts-athletes/