

How to Reduce Muscle Soreness

Proper recovery after exercise can minimize muscle soreness. Here are some tips that may help.

Hydrate. Water is the best way to hydrate after exercise and during recovery. The easiest way to tell if you are dehydrated is by the color of your urine. It should be light yellow or clear within a couple of hours after exercise. If it is dark yellow, you need more hydration.

Fuel. After exercise, have a snack that contains carbohydrates and protein. Good choices include yogurt and almonds, peanut butter with a banana, rice cakes, or whole-wheat pretzels. Eating the right foods after a workout will improve your energy level and help with recovery.

Circulation. A light activity, such as an easy bike ride, light stretching, or slower walking, will stimulate blood flow and help you cool down after activity. Better circulation will improve the speed of your recovery.

Compression. A massage or use of a foam roller can help move inflammatory fluids out of muscles and help with sore or tight spots from worked muscles.

Rest. Normal muscle soreness will peak about 48 hours after exercise, and should be much better by the third day. This is why a rest day between strengthening exercises is recommended.

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