
Fitness Tips

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How long should I wait to work out after an injury?

Question: *I twisted my ankle a couple of days ago and it's still sore. How long should I wait before I work out on it?*

Answer: Of course this depends on how you injured your ankle and what kind of workout you usually do, but for the most part, here's how to handle an injury from the start:

- >>> Immediately stop what you are/were doing.
- >>> Take the time to look at & assess the area affected.
- >>> If there is sharp pain, swelling and/or redness of the skin, seek advice from your doctor immediately.
- >>> Some injuries like muscle pulls, strains, back or neck pain may affect the whole body and the only remedy for full recovery will be to take the time to rest.
- >>> Let the afflicted area rest from exercise completely, until the pain or discomfort is gone.
- >>> If it only affects you in certain positions or exercises (and you feel up to it) avoid those exercises and concentrate on the unaffected areas for working out.
- >>> Again, if you feel up to it, see if you can still do light exercise like walking, swimming or yoga. Remember to use the first sign of pain or discomfort as your guide (stopping if you feel the injured area).
- >>> Injuries that cause swelling (twisted ankles or knees) should be elevated and cold pack applied to the swollen area. Avoid heat until swelling subsides completely.
- >>> And finally, if symptoms persist in any injury or afflicted area, always seek medical attention.

The bottom line when you are hurt is to allow yourself the time to heal. If you are in doubt as to whether you should work out, you probably aren't ready to get back to it. Your body will let you know when to take it easy, just listen to what it's telling you!

Cari Draft Elliott is an ACE-Certified Personal Trainer who makes "house calls"! Please check out her website at www.oneononefitgirl.com and email your questions to cari@oneononefitgirl.com.
