
Fitness Tips

by Cari Draft Elliott, BS, CPT - ACE-Certified Personal Trainer

I'm sore everyday after working out! What can I do?

Question: *I'm trying really hard to lose weight, so I'm doing something everyday, from running on the treadmill to walking the dog. The problem is, I'm an achey, sore mess! I feel like I've been sore every single day since I've started doing this three weeks ago. The magazines say to "rest", but they also say to get 30 minutes of cardio exercise every day. When am I supposed to rest?*

Answer: Stop the madness! It sounds like you might be trying to do too much, too soon. You're right, you do need to exercise every day, AND you need to rest in order for your muscles to recover. The key here is doing something DIFFERENT every day so you are able to rest the muscles you've used -- don't use ALL your muscles every day! In addition, you should block out one of every seven days to REST.

Some of the latest research shows that people prone to stiffer muscles may be more susceptible to muscle damage (soreness) after physical activity than others. They may benefit from warming up first, as this has been shown to reduce symptoms of additional damage, and may possibly protect against further soreness. Warm up before a workout! Begin by raising your heart rate slowly by doing some light aerobic activity, like a brisk walk. After the muscles are warm, stretch out the muscles you're going to use (never stretch a muscle when it is cold). Warming up will not necessarily alleviate the achiness felt from the previous day's activity, but it might decrease the severity of the damage from an upcoming session. It also may help by increasing flexibility. In addition to the benefits of warming up, as muscles adapt, you'll be less likely to experience soreness with the same level of activity. This is known as the "repeated bout effect."

In the mean time, massage can feel really good to fatigued muscles. Take your workouts slowly and listen to your body -- rest those sore parts!

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.
