

Walk Kansas

celebrate healthy living

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What to Do When It Hurts

Is “no pain, no gain” a good approach to exercise or just a myth? It is perfectly normal to feel sore after exercise, especially if the activity is new or if you have increased the level of intensity or duration; however, aches and pains should be minor. Muscles go through stress when you exercise, and small microscopic tears occur in the muscle. This damage, along with inflammation, causes the pain. The gradually increasing soreness you often feel 24 to 48 hours later is called delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) and is a natural outcome of any physical activity.

Your muscles should burn a little when walking, and you should feel a little sore a few days after doing strengthening exercises. You know you’ve done too much if soreness prevents you from performing daily activities or if excessive soreness lasts three days or more after exercise. Too much soreness can deter you from continuing exercise habits.

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.

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What to Do When It Hurts

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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.

• 2013 Success Stories

• During the last two Walk Kansas programs, I joined a team and let them down by not doing anything. Not this year. I had already adopted major lifestyle changes before this Walk Kansas, so I was eager to be on a team and actually participate. It was fun to see me increase my minutes of activity every week trying to outdo what I had done the week before. This year Walk Kansas was a success for me!

— Reno County

Move of the Week: Squats to Strengthen Your Lower Body

Squats are one of the best exercises you can do to strengthen your legs. When you do these properly, they also improve knee stability, promote mobility, and improve balance. Squats are one of the best functional exercises out there! Here you go — this is how to do squats:

1. Stand with your feet just over shoulder-width apart.

2. Keep your back in a neutral position, and keep your knees centered over your feet.
3. Slowly bend your knees, hips, and ankles, lowering until you reach a 90-degree angle.
4. Return to your starting position.

For a demonstration on doing squats go to:

<http://www.walkkansas.org/p.aspx?tabid=66&itemid=14&cmd=view#14>

Roll It Out

Most people don't have a masseuse nearby to help smooth out aches and pains. Foam rolling is one way to target tense and overworked muscles and is similar to massage. Pressure is created by your own body weight as you roll over the firm cylinder. Foam rollers can be purchased at popular retailers and differ in size, shape, foam type, and cost. A firmer roller provides a more aggressive massage. These two moves are recommended:

For pain that runs from the side of your hip down past your knee (IT band syndrome): Place foam roller on the floor. Roll the outside of your thigh briefly over the roller. For a firmer massage, use all your body weight. For lighter massage, place the opposite leg on the floor to reduce some of the pressure. Roll from just below your pelvis to just above your knee.

For mid to upper back: With the roller on the floor and perpendicular to your body, lie back onto the roller so it is located roughly where a woman's bra strap would cross her back. Lift your hips off the ground and arch backwards slightly. Keep your head and shoulder off the ground. Roll a few inches above and below the bra strap line.

A demonstration of both moves can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDBKKOCqx34>.

A foam-rolled massage should not last more than three minutes on any one spot. There will be some discomfort, so use your body weight to control the firmness of the massage. For more on foam rolling go to: <http://newsinfo.iu.edu/tips/page/normal/17854.html>.

Sugar Sense

Everyone strives to use good common sense when making decisions. You can learn to apply that same sense of good judgment when choosing foods that are high in sugar. These are “extra” foods, or treats, and they are not essential to your health.

Extra calories are built into the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the allowances are small. If you eat approximately 2,000 calories each day, your allowance for extras is about 265 calories. The extra foods include those with added sugars and solid fat, such as sweet baked products, sweetened cereals, soda and other sweetened beverages, higher fat meats, cheeses, and whole milk.

The recipe for Brownie Bites below can help you limit the portion sizes of treats. Keep in mind that one “bite” (with three strawberries) has 107 calories. If you drink a regular 12-ounce soda and spread a half teaspoon of butter on a dinner roll, you are already at your extra calorie limit for the day. They add up fast! If you want to increase your calorie budget for “extras,” add more physical activity to your day to balance things out.

Sensible Sugar Tips:

- Drink less sugar. Choose unsweetened beverages. Buy only 100% fruit juice and limit juice consumption to 8 ounces per day.
- Have a sweet tooth? Head for natural sugar sources such as fruit or plain yogurt.
- Choose dark chocolate over milk chocolate.
- Use modified recipes that reduce the amount of added sugar.
- Choose products stating “no sugar added,” especially with drinks and desserts.
- Read food labels. The first step to limiting sugar is to know what is in the foods you currently eat.
- Limit sugar-added foods at celebrations by offering smaller portions and including healthful foods such as fruit, popcorn, graham crackers, raw vegetables, and low-fat cheese.



One Pan Brownie Bites

Makes 36 “bites”

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup canola oil
- ⅔ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ cup white whole wheat flour
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly grease mini muffin tins.
2. In a saucepan over low heat, melt the butter. Add canola oil and sugar, stir to combine and dissolve sugar. Remove from heat.

3. Stir in the cocoa, salt, baking powder, Greek yogurt, and vanilla.
4. Add eggs, stirring until smooth.
5. Add flour and chocolate chips, again stirring just until flour is moistened. Spoon batter into 36 mini muffin cups.
6. Bake brownies for 12 to 15 minutes. The brownie bites should feel set on the edges and in the center. Remove them from the oven, let cool slightly, then remove from tin and allow bites to cool completely.
7. Store bites in an air-tight container or freezer bag, and freeze immediately after bites have cooled.



Nutrition Information per brownie bite and three large strawberries:

107 calories; 5 g fat; 15 g carbohydrates; 8 g sugars; 2 g protein; 2 g fiber; 10 mg sodium.