



# Muscle Soreness

Have you ever felt some stiffness and soreness the morning after an exercise session? Sure, we all have experienced what's called Delayed Muscle Soreness. It's a sign that you've trained unusually hard, or tried a new exercise. Did you know there is a way to prevent this muscle soreness?

Delayed muscle soreness manifests 24-48 hours after the exercise session and slowly decreases after about 72 hours. The most current research tells us the soreness is due to microscopic tears in the muscles and surrounding connective tissue following eccentric exercise (the contracting of muscle as it lengthens under tension). Most people experience delayed muscle soreness when they increase the intensity, frequency or duration of their workouts, or participate in an activity they are unfamiliar with. It's expected that beginning exercisers, or those who have taken a long break in training, will experience soreness when starting a new exercise program.

To prevent delayed muscle soreness, gradually increase your intensity, frequency **OR** duration. Beginners should exercise with light weights no more than 3 times per week. Stick with the same intensity, frequency and duration for a few months, and then gradually build one component at a time. Use a little heavier weight, do more repetitions with the same weight, or exercise for a longer period of time.

Conditioned exercisers who want to try a new workout should proceed gradually. Don't overdo it the first time, just because you're an experienced fitness enthusiast.

If you do experience delayed muscle soreness, studies show the best treatment is: Rest and ice, massage, light stretching and use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).