

Minimize and Ease Sore Muscles

Exercise is good for you, but many people avoid it in order to prevent suffering from sore muscles. **Here are several ways to minimize and ease sore muscles:**



- ◆ Breathe deeply. This can help take your mind off of the pain.
- ◆ Keep your body in shape. Regular physical activity, instead of random exercising, can help prevent sore muscles.
- ◆ Stretch your muscles before and after you exercise.
- ◆ Strengthen muscles with squats, lunges, step exercises, and weights.
- ◆ Pace yourself when you exercise. Avoid pushing yourself past your limit or overdoing it.
- ◆ Apply cold or heat therapy. Cold or heat packs are useful and easily available to relieve pain naturally.
- ◆ Take an over-the-counter pain reliever.
- ◆ Drink plenty of water to hydrate your body.
- ◆ Avoid strenuous activity as long as you're in pain.

Spin the Wheel for Fitness

Today, a wide range of fitness options are available that cater to all fitness levels. **If you're looking for a way to get fit, consider some of these options:**

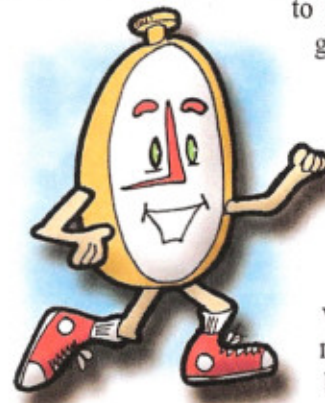
- **Aerobics.** These classes are great for toning muscles, burning calories, and getting your heart rate up.
- **Dance.** Dancing is fast becoming a popular and fun way to get fit. Check out classes offered in your area.
- **Yoga and Pilates.** Yoga is a form of exercise that concentrates on different positions and deep breathing techniques. It can improve flexibility and posture and relax your body and mind. Like yoga, pilates also helps make the body more strong and supple and can improve posture.
- **Boxercise.** This includes techniques like tai-chi, boxing, and karate. It's cardiovascular exercise, which means it gets your heart rate going and your lungs working. You will do a range of kicking and punching moves.
- **Swimming.** This works every muscle in the body and is low impact, which means people with health conditions such as arthritis, back pain, or other issues can do it without the risk of hurting themselves.
- **Weights.** Weight bearing exercises are good for toning up muscles and strengthening the bones. Ask in your local gym for tips on how to get started or if they have classes.



Power by the Hour

No time to be strong and healthy? Can't find an hour a day to be fit? Really?

Time management is crucial to an effective fitness program. We all start the week with the same 168 hours. A key element to being mentally, physically, and spiritually fit is



to maximize the hours you're given each day. Every moment you're either progressing toward your goals... or not.

You're either moving forward or backward.

Here's what I've done to make the most of my time. I took a notepad and wrote down all my time commitments for a full week. I broke the hours down into generous portions for all of my activities – 8 hours a night for sleep, 40 hours for work plus 10 hours of travel time, 1 hour for every meal, 2 hours a day for work around the house, time with my son, and 2 hours a day for relaxation. Building in extra time for each activity, I still ended up with 17 hours a week to spend on an exercise program or something else.

I challenge you to evaluate your time in the same manner with the intent purpose of making fitness a real priority in your life. Break your days up into the actual minutes of how you spend your hours and be honest to list all the ways you waste time. Build in time for relaxation as a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle. Evaluate the numbers and see what you come up with.

Once you've gathered your hourly inventory, I'm relatively certain you'll see that you do have time. Realistically, you could put 10 of those hours toward exercise, especially if you do something active daily. You can also focus on making your fitness routine part of your hourly life. For instance, plan on taking five minutes every hour to do something productive toward your fitness goal. Maybe it's taking five minutes to perform sit-ups, push-ups, or squats. Whatever you need mentally, physically, or spiritually to push yourself forward, take the time every hour.

Think of it as gaining power by the hour.

Wendie Pett is a mother and fitness expert, the author of Every Woman's Guide to Personal Power and co-author of The Miracle Seven. She coaches people individually and conducts seminars to corporate groups to help teach others how to maximize their wellness through the balance of mind, body, and spirit. For more information on Wendie, visit www.wendiepett.com.

