

AVOID OVERKILL...TAKE IT SLOW

Written by Valecia Weeks, CPT, LMT
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What are your summer goals? Is to start an exercise regimen? Well, sometimes even the thought of physical activity can become overwhelming. You have to avoid “**OVERKILL**”. Take it slow. The first thing you always want to do is warm up. It is very important for your health; and warming up will help you enjoy your workout more. Warming up also raises your body temperature and prepares your heart and its entire system by slowly increasing the blood circulation to and from your heart and muscles.

We have what's called connective tissue attached to our muscles. Connective tissue is like hard plastic. It is very stiff and can be easily broken if not properly warmed up. The same applies to connective tissue...it will not become flexible until warmed up for about 5-10 minutes.

Proper warm up and cool downs will also reduce the severity of soreness in the next day or two following your workout. Increased blood flow and removal of toxins helps more oxygen to get to the muscles. Retaining waste products contributes to soreness. That's why it is also a good idea to get a massage before and after a workout. Massage increases blood flow as well as moves unhealthy toxins to your waste system so that they can be removed from your body. Increased blood flow and less toxins = better performance.

If you are starting off with resistance training for the first time, or even if it's been awhile, try picking 1 to 2 exercises for each area of the body – **the upper body** (chest, arms, upper back, neck), **the lower body** (gluts, legs, ankles), and **the core** (you know, the area where the mushroom usually resides...THE ABS and lower back).

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If you are a beginner at aerobic training, start out with a brisk walk for about 10 minutes, 3 times a week. Now, don't start with anything that will get you out of breath. You want to just get moving enough to get the heart rate up. Start gradually building the duration of the workout until you've gotten up to about 30 minutes at that pace. Next you may want to increase the intensity. Instead of just walking, alternate walking and jogging until you've gotten up to more jogging than walking.

STAY HYDRATED – It is very important to drink plenty of water as you exercise. When you are active, you should drink at least 10-12 eight-ounce cups a day. Ladies, this will help our joints move better and flush out the toxins that build up in your muscles during your workout.

So Ladies, now that the EXCUSE of soreness has been alleviated, what's your excuse now? NO MORE EXCUSES! Let's get started...