

THE TOUCH FACTOR

YOUR GUIDE TO

DELAYED ONSET MUSCLE SORENESS

IT'S QUITE NORMAL TO FEEL PAIN AFTER TRAINING. HOWEVER, IF IT LINGERS YOU MAY NEED TO PAY IT MORE ATTENTION. PHYSIOTHERAPIST, TIM KEELEY EXPLAINS.

THERE ARE MANY factors and mechanisms that cause pain in the body and sometimes you may feel it's not bad enough to actually go and see someone about it. The bottom line is you should be doing something about your pain **BEFORE** it becomes severe or long lasting.

Delayed onset muscle soreness

After training you can develop delayed onset muscle soreness, known as 'DOMS'. This is pain and stiffness, typically felt in the muscle for 24 to 72 hours after strenuous or unaccustomed exercise. It is caused by damage to the muscle during the eccentric (lengthening) part of the contraction, and the soreness is because the muscle is adapting post-exercise.

It is a common and a normal muscle response if you have pushed yourself hard, worked muscles in the outer limits of their flexibility, lifted heavier weights than you usually do, or you have not exercised in a while. For example, if you have done a lot of heavy squats, and the next day your thigh and buttocks are sore; this is DOMS. The pain is over a large area throughout the muscles and

usually both sides. The best thing to do is rest, gentle stretching and avoid training the sore body parts at that same intensity for 48 to 72 hours.

Doing muscle building and strength training programs means you will most likely experience DOMS. Many people refer to this as a 'good pain', but the biggest misconception is that people feel like they have to get DOMS or they are not working out hard enough. You need to make sure you are on the correct graded training program for your level of fitness, strength and conditioning.

Severe DOMS

If you are getting severe DOMS, meaning you have muscle pain that prevents you from walking properly or you struggle to get off the toilet, then you have pushed it too far. Having severe DOMS will make you change your patterns of movement to avoid the pain in the muscles, which will make you compensate during exercise with other muscle groups and overload biomechanically. This type of compensation can result in injury and, therefore, is not what you should

be aiming for. Again, the treatment for severe DOMS is rest, then gentle stretching but also seeing a personal trainer for correction of the level and intensity of your workout program.

The bottom line is, you should always take notice of any pain during and after exercise, noting specifically when and where it is on your body. Make sure you are on the correct training program and seek professional advice if you have an injury or prolonged pain.



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