



Feel better faster with **active recovery**



Congratulations!
You did it.

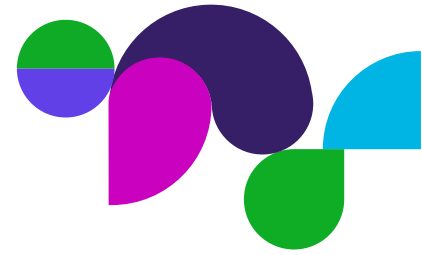
Now it's time to treat
your hard-earned
aches and pains.

On a quest to increase your physical fitness?

Maybe it's for sport, a physical challenge or keeping up with friends and family. Maybe you're working toward your own strength and endurance goals. Reaching a personal best and pushing yourself beyond your limitations are admirable feats.

But what's next? For most people, it's a couple of days of muscle soreness. There could be fatigue and even difficulty moving about. Many of us want to throw in the towel and retire to the sofa until we're better. But you can make your recovery easier.

Trainers and healthcare professionals talk about “rest days” and “recovery days,” but what’s the difference?



Doesn't rest lead to recovery? **Yes and no.**

What's a rest day?

Resting your body after a workout is as important as the workout itself. The goal of a rest day is to give your body a break from your regular hard workout schedule. During exercise, your body endures stress. Rest days enable your muscles and tissues to recover and repair. They also let your mind relax. Rest days allow your body to refuel by replenishing glycogen, or energy stored in your muscles and liver.¹ A rest day is not about being completely free from movement. Take a walk, do some gentle yoga or take a leisurely swim.

Rest is about spacing out demanding physical activity to reduce fatigue and make your exercise routine more effective.²

Consider active recovery

Active recovery helps you feel refreshed and restored. The goal is to balance the intensity of your workouts. Through low-impact, low-stress activities, you can increase blood flow to your muscles and connective tissue. This will help clear out soreness caused by metabolic byproducts like lactic acid and speed your recovery. Consider it a boosted rest day.

These active recovery methods may help you avoid burnout and injury from overtraining:^{2,3}

- Walking—out in nature or on a treadmill
- Cycling, rowing or elliptical—warm up, find your pace and cool down
- Yoga—for strength, balance and flexibility
- Body-weight exercises—squats, lunges, planks and more
- Swimming or aqua workout—light resistance plus cardio
- Stretching—with or without resistance bands



Recovery treatments to feel better

- Foam roller—relieves aches and increases blood flow
- Massage therapy—reduces muscle tightness and assists with circulation
- Sauna or steam room, hot tub or spa—soothes aches and pains and increases heart rate
- Compression clothing—promotes blood flow
- Cryotherapy—a minute or two in a cold pool, bath or shower reduces pain in some people
- Percussion therapy—otherwise known as a massage gun



As always, before you start any new exercise routine, talk to a doctor to make sure it's safe for you.

Whichever methods of recovery are right for you, the goal is to feel good and be the healthiest, injury-free version of you.

Learn how we can help support you on your wellness journey.
To sign up or learn more, go to Go.Livongo.com/STATEOFIOWA/New

¹<https://www.acefitness.org/resources/everyone/blog/7176/8-reasons-to-take-a-rest-day/>

²<https://www.acefitness.org/continuing-education/certified/april-2021/7826/recovery-strategies-the-secret-to-maximizing-workouts/>

³<https://blog.nasm.org/active-recovery>

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