

REST AND RECOVERY



When to Skip Your Workout



Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, but there are times when it's best to skip your workout and take a rest day. Why? It gives your body time to heal and recover, which prevents muscle fatigue and reduces the risk of injury. It can also help boost performance and mental morale – kind of like what the weekend does for our work performance!

The number of rest days needed will depend on factors like your fitness level, age, and the type of exercise and intensity of your workouts. Knowing your body and its limits will help you determine when to go all-out with your exercise and when to take a break, but here are a few instances when you should skip your workout.

1

You're really stressed out

Exercise can be an effective stress-reliever because it stimulates endorphin production, which leaves us feeling good after a workout. But stress can take a toll – both mentally and physically – and exercise raises your heart rate, putting added stress on the body. The key is to listen to your body! On especially stressful days when your workload is high and your schedule is overloaded, you may want to swap an intense weight-training session for yoga or a light jog.

2

You're sleep-deprived

Forcing yourself to work out when you're fatigued can translate into poor performance and even injury. If you're not getting enough good-quality sleep, hitting the hay rather than the gym may be the best way to prioritize your health. It's not a free pass to repeatedly skip exercise so you can catch some z's, but it could be an indication that you need to adjust your sleep schedule by getting to bed an hour or two sooner on days you want to work out.

3

You're not feeling well

If you're feeling under the weather, exercise may not be the best activity for you, but how sick is too sick to work out? If you're fighting minor ailments like a headache, nasal congestion, or sore throat, it's still ok to exercise. You may want to reduce the intensity or opt for a shorter workout. Skip exercise for the first few days of a viral infection to help your body fight it (and to prevent spreading it to others). If you're running a fever, skip the workout and get some rest.

4

You're really sore

Some soreness is normal, but having sore muscles all the time, means you aren't letting your body heal between workouts. If you're just starting an exercise routine or you've just finished a strenuous workout, give your body some time to rest before jumping back in. Pushing through extreme soreness or muscle fatigue instead of giving your body adequate rest can mean your body may need more time to heal. You may also increase your risk of injury.

Sources www.healthline.com/health/exercise-fitness/rest-day
www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/what-to-know-rest-day-workouts##1 | Images from Freepik.com