

4 Foods to Soothe Sore Muscles

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If you've been exercising more, you may be suffering from the aches and pains of having overdone it at the gym. I've been there. Making sure your workout is challenging without overdoing it is one way to prevent muscle soreness. But research also points to some foods and beverages that can help ward off and minimize exercise-related muscle soreness, which we've reported on in *EatingWell* Magazine.



Blueberries

New research out of New Zealand suggests that the antioxidants in blueberries may help ward off muscle fatigue by mopping up the additional free radicals that muscles produce during exercise.

Tart Cherries & Pomegranates

British researchers recently found that people who drank 1 ounce of concentrated cherry juice twice daily for 10 days bounced back faster from their workout (an intensive leg-resistance training session on day 8) than those who skipped the juice. The reason: The anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties in tart cherries-and other fruit juices like grape, pomegranate, acai, blueberry and cranberry-essentially act as natural NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen and aspirin), reducing exercise-induced muscle damage.

Ginger

Ginger is rich in inflammation-fighting compounds, such as gingerols, which may reduce the aches of osteoarthritis and soothe sore muscles. In a recent study, people who took ginger capsules daily for 11 days reported 25 percent less muscle pain when they performed exercises designed to strain their muscles (compared with a similar group taking placebo capsules). Another study found that ginger-extract injections helped relieve osteoarthritis pain of the knee.