

Delayed onset muscle soreness is the aching feeling that sets in after 12 – 24 hours of dancing. The aching feeling is a side effect of the repair process. As your body heals, microscopic muscle-fiber tears.

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*Soreness comes from  
Eccentric Muscle Contraction such as  
landing jumps and  
Concentric muscle contraction such as  
doing too many relevés*

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## 8 Ways to Deal with Delayed Onset Soreness

### 1. Eat anti-inflammatory foods that decrease the duration and intensity of muscle soreness

- Spices - Cinnamon, Ginger, Turmeric, Clove, Cardamom (all are anti-inflammatory)
- Cherry juice, tart Cherries
- Essential Fatty Acids – fish oil, Cod Liver Oil, Flax seed oil, salmon, sardines, tuna, Cod, oysters
- Bone Broth – has glutamine. Glutamine depletion contributes to aching muscles. Restoring with daily intake helps.

### 2. Stay well Hydrated

- Consider how well a dry sponge works compared to a wet one.
- Consider that your muscles are like either the dry or moist sponge....you decide.

### 3. Eat within 30 minutes after dancing

- Eating some protein and a carbohydrate right after dancing helps to repair your muscle tissue.
  - Carbohydrates – apples, crackers, carrots, celery, sweet potatoes, kale, Brussels sprouts, pineapple, mango, Berries
  - Protein – egg, poultry, fish, meat, shellfish, game
  - Combinations (carbohydrate and protein) – milk, beans, yogurt, peanut butter, cottage cheese, chocolate milk

## Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness

### 4. Use Body Work to help prevent soreness by keeping muscle fibers mobile

- Massage and self-massage (keep self-massage tools, like a foam roller, rolling stick and tennis ball with you in your dance bag.
- Acupuncture
- Physical Therapy

### 5. Pace yourself in Rehearsal

- Figure out how and when to use your energy (work smart as well as hard)
- Consider whether you are tired or stressed or whether you can push through. Consider drinking 4-8 oz juice or eating ½ an apple or an orange if you need some quick energy

### 6. Make sure you COOL DOWN

- Stretching out and bringing your body temperature down after rehearsing will prevent or lessen your muscles from tightening up through the night.



### 7. Elevate your legs to decrease swelling

- After rehearsing and forming the micro tears that cause delayed onset muscle soreness, your body sends blood to the micro tears as a means of repairing.
- Though this is a means of repair, it causes inflammation and may cause swelling
- Find your best anti-inflammatory process
  - Icing or heating
  - Experiment to determine which one feels best on your body (alternate between both as needed)
  - Be cautious with overusing ibuprofen and naproxen as they can mask injury and prolong treatment.

### 8. Sleep, Sleep and More Sleep



- Muscles have the best chance of recovery when you're sleeping
- Full healing comes from resting
- Aim for at least 6 hours of sleep. More is even better.
  - Limit or avoid caffeine at night so you can get quality sleep.