

Relieve Pain with Foam

The back of the neck, shoulders, low back, hip(s), knees, ankles and heels. What do they have in common? They are the places on our bodies that most often have aches or pains. A common source of pain can be muscle tightness brought on by overuse, or in some cases under use.

Things like driving, working at a computer, standing in line, sleeping on your side or any number of everyday activities can create the conditions for tight muscles. The affected areas typically develop “knots” that can alter a muscles optimal length and disrupt how you normally move. When this happens, everyday movements can become labored and painful. The “knots” must be released so that muscles can relax and return to their normal functioning length.



One possible answer to your nagging aches and pains could be a simple foam roller.

This unassuming device is used to perform a flexibility technique called **Self-Myofascial Release** or **Foam Rolling**.

“You use it to relax tight muscles and feel better.”

The goal of **Self-myofascial release** is to release the knot(s) in the muscle or muscle group by providing consistent pressure **with a foam roller**. By applying this consistent pressure, a mechanism in your muscles the body will recognize that the pressure provided will not create injury to the area, thus “releasing” its tension on the muscle(s).

“A mechanism in your muscles senses the pressure. Your body then sends a signal back to the knotted muscle telling it to relax.”

Some muscles will relax immediately, while others will need repeated treatment. Bear in mind that the tenderness experienced when putting pressure on knotted muscles can be mild to severe. Do not let this be a deterrent to potentially liberating yourself from “learn to live with it” pain. If you are persistent and consistent you will begin to see results.



Something else to consider once you’ve relaxed knotted muscles are the things you do throughout your day that might have caused your pain in the first place. Unless you change those movement patterns, muscle pain will continue to harass you. The easiest thing you can do is give yourself frequent breaks from things like working at a computer, carrying a bag/backpack a certain way, or doing a particular exercise for weeks or months on end.

Foam rolling instructions:

- Roll slowly (1" per second) over muscles.
- Do not roll on joints.
- If you find a tender area or "knot" hold for 20-30 seconds or until tenderness subsides by 50%, then move on.
- Take deep breaths while holding on a "knot" and let yourself relax.
- If the "knot" is too intense move on and come back to it later.
- Foam rolling may be performed daily.

*Use of this technique is not recommended for diabetic individuals who have lost the protective sensation in the lower limbs. It is also not suggested for anyone during pregnancy or who has hypertension, coronary heart disease, intermittent claudication/peripheral arterial disease, and osteoporosis.

For more detailed information and videos on Foam Rolling visit:

www.goodtogofitness.com

