



DOMS

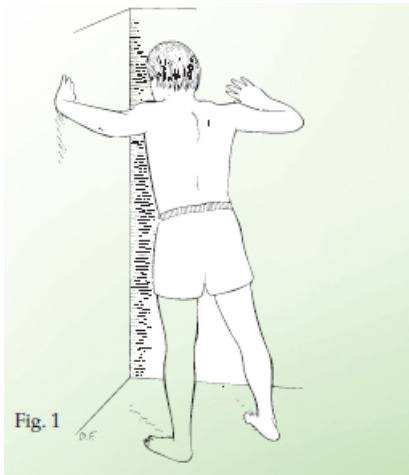
What is it and how can it affect me?

DOMS stands for “delayed onset muscle soreness,” or more simply, the muscular weakness, stiffness, and soreness you experience after participating in an activity you don’t do regularly. Believe it or not, horseback riding is most certainly an activity that causes DOMS, as well as being a volunteer at RideAbility. If you don’t frequently ride horse (about 3 times per week) or help support someone riding a horse, you will probably begin to experience this 12-24 hours after RideAbility and it will peak in intensity 24-48 hours afterwards. Although DOMS will eventually dissipate, there are a few tricks you can implement to quicken the process.

- Keep moving! Inactivity will only increase stiffness. By moving more, you can get your joints, muscles and ligaments loosened up and increase your tolerance of pain, resulting in a decrease of the DOMS symptoms!
- Take a warm bath/shower and massage the affected area. This will increase blood flow to the muscle which quickens the healing process.
- Stretch! When you stretch your muscles for 30-60 seconds at a time, you can decrease tightness, and ultimately get rid of some of that soreness. Stretching, although important for warming up prior to RideAbility, is even MORE important after riding! Make this a routine for yourself the night/next day after RideAbility. But be careful not to overstretch! On the back of this page you will find a few stretches that will help you target the muscles you use as a volunteer for RideAbility.



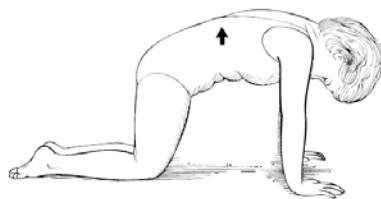
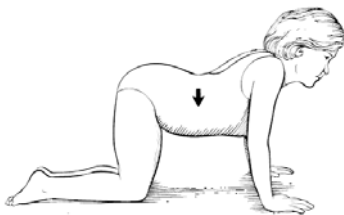
- Cradle your right elbow with your left hand. Slowly raise your right arm and pull it across your chest until you feel a gentle pull in your right shoulder. Repeat for left arm.



- Stand facing the corner of a room an arm's length away, feet shoulder width apart. Place one hand on each wall at shoulder level. Bend your elbows, keeping your back straight. Your fingers should point toward the corner. Slowly let the weight of your body go forward, moving your chest toward the corner.



- Stand with your hands against the wall. Place your left foot back, keeping your knee straight and your left heel flat on the floor. Bring your right foot forward on the floor and bend your knee. Keeping your back straight and your hips forward, slowly bend your elbows and lean onto your right leg until you feel a stretch in your left calf.



- Kneel on your hands and knees on the floor. Slowly let your back sag to the floor. Then slowly make an arch and bring it back up.