



Muscle Cramps: What Can I Do?

A **muscle cramp** is a sudden, painful tightening of a muscle, often in the legs or feet. They are very common, especially at night, and usually harmless, but they can interrupt sleep and daily life.



What You Can Do

Stretch & Move

- Gently stretch the muscle when a cramp starts.
- Try flexing your foot up toward your shin if your calf cramps.
- Regular stretching before bed or exercise can help prevent cramps.

Check Your Routine

- Warm up before exercise, and cool down with stretches.
- Avoid sitting or standing in the same position for long periods.
- Comfortable shoes with good support can make a difference.

Support Your Body

- A warm bath, heating pad, or gentle massage may relax tight muscles.
- For some, ice packs help calm soreness after a cramp.

Nutrition Matters

- A balanced diet with enough potassium, magnesium, and calcium may help.
- Foods like bananas, leafy greens, nuts, beans, yogurt, and fish are good sources.

Stay Hydrated and Review Your Meds

- Drink enough water through the day.
- Limit excess caffeine and alcohol, which can make dehydration worse.
- Some medicines (like diuretics, statins, or certain blood pressure drugs) can increase risk of cramps.
- Never stop a medication on your own, but ask your doctor if your medicines might be contributing.

Home Remedies People Try

- Pickle juice: Small sips may stop a cramp faster than water for some people.
- Mustard packet: The strong taste may activate nerves that reduce cramping.
- Electrolyte drinks (sports drinks, coconut water): May help if cramps are related to dehydration or electrolyte imbalance. Safe in moderation.

** Other folk remedies patients mention include soap under the sheets, apple cider vinegar, or magnesium. These aren't well proven but generally safe to try.

When to Seek Help

- Cramps are very frequent, severe, or not improving.
- You notice muscle weakness, numbness, or swelling.
- You have other health conditions that

