

WORK OUT OR CRASH OUT?

When those skip-the-gym excuses are real reasons

It's easy to tell yourself you simply can't make that class or session – and it's reassuring to know that *sometimes*, the experts agree...

"I've got my period"

You should WORK OUT

Why? The endorphins (feel-good chemicals) released when you exercise are powerful enough to overcome PMS. Plus, "A recent study found that exercising during your period is easier and burns more fat than exercising the week after," says personal trainer Jeff Archer.

What? Make the most of your ability to burn calories by doing cardiovascular exercise.

Warning During your period, your body temperature rises and you may have stomach pains. "These both decrease the stability of your joints," says trainer Jason Anderson, "so be wary of balancing exercise, such as yoga."

"I'm hungover"

You should CRASH OUT

Why? "The outer lining of the brain retains fluid to allow it to function normally



'I would go for a swim but I can't find my goggles'

during this self-imposed drought," explains Anderson. "It's never a good idea to exercise when you're dehydrated because it will only exacerbate your condition."

What can I do instead? "Recover with some toast and juice to restore your blood sugar, and drink plenty of water," says Archer.

"I'm stressed"

You should WORK OUT

Why? When you're anxious you experience the classic fight-or-flight reaction. "This causes the body to release adrenaline to help you respond quickly, but in a non-physical situation it can leave us feeling stressed," explains GLAMOUR's body coach and celebrity trainer, Matt Roberts. "The endorphins released by exercise often counter the stress reaction."

What? Workouts such as kick-boxing and sprint training will help focus your mind on something more positive. "T'ai chi is ideal for reminding perspective, and yoga and Pilates classes will help you relax," says Archer.

Warning "The fight-or-flight response tends to result in sore shoulders and headaches," says Roberts. "Without exercise it's difficult to release this physical tension."

"I have a cold"

IT DEPENDS

Why? "It's fine to exercise with a head cold as long as you reduce the intensity of your workout by half," says Archer. However, if your body aches and you've got the shakes, avoid the gym. "When you're suffering from any type of infection, a great demand is being placed on your body to fight it," says Anderson. "Exercise will only increase this demand on your body and delay the recovery process."

Warning Ease yourself in gently after a break and make sure you've fully recovered before going all out on the treadmill.

"I'm really tired"

You should WORK OUT

Why? This is the most common excuse for not going to the gym, but exercise will actually boost your metabolism, burning fat and releasing more energy; it will also help you sleep better. "Even if you do a shorter routine than usual, a little is better than nothing," says Archer.

What? "Arrange to meet a friend for a run or a swim," suggests Archer. "If you tie yourself into an arrangement that involves a fixed time and other people, you're less likely to skip it."

Warning Tiredness can reduce balance and coordination, so don't attempt demanding exercises, such as ballet or body pump.



Let loose

WEEKEND WAISTLINE

Do you eat carefully during the week but think the weekend 'doesn't count'? A new study* found that we tuck away an average of 82 extra calories each Friday, Saturday and

Sunday. Over the course of the year this could result in a weight gain of almost 5lbs. The alternative? Splurge every other weekend and you'll hardly notice the extra few pounds.

"Crisps don't have any calories if you eat them on a Saturday, right?"