

**TITLE 1:** “Ask the Doctor”

**TITLE 2:**

**DATE:** August 2000

**AUTHOR/S:** Dr. Mark Buchfuhrer

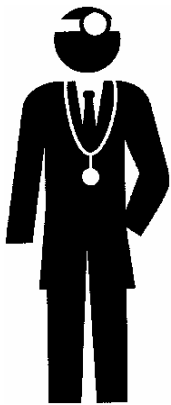
**KEYWORDS:**

- Diet/exercise

**ABSTRACT OVERVIEW:** A question from a reader regarding exercise and RLS symptoms. How can you exercise without suffering worsening of symptoms?

**COPY OF ARTICLE:**

**Q.** I am a 44-year-old female and have had RLS since age 21. When I exercise – such as aerobics, walk, job etc. – that night and for several nights thereafter, I get more RLS pains than usual. Are there any suggestions so that I can exercise and gain the exercise benefits without making my RLS worse?



**A.** Mild to moderate exercise generally makes RLS better. Many RLS sufferers have stretching routines that they carry out just before going to bed that are very effective in relieving their RLS symptoms. Vigorous exercise often worsens RLS.

These exercise effects (good or bad) usually last for only several hours after the exercise is performed. Your problem with prolonged exacerbation of RLS after exercise is very unusual. It may be that you are exercising too vigorously, and decreasing the level of exercise may have a better effect (or lack of it) on your RLS symptoms. Try starting with very low levels of exercise and increase slowly until you notice worsening of your RLS symptoms. This may help you figure out the correct level of exercise that you can do without bothering your RLS.

*Dr. Mark Buchfuhrer  
Gallatin Medical Clinic  
Downey, CA*