

GYM GYAN

Feeling guilty about all the sweets you've tucked into during Diwali? If you're considering joining the gym for the first time, **Dev Goswami** clears up some of the most frequently asked questions...



>> If you're not sweating during your workout, it does not mean that you're not exercising right or not burning calories

As you enter the gym, you are faced with a plethora of doubts in your mind. You did not have breakfast in the morning — was it the right thing to do? Your arms are aching but you should continue... right? You feel you might come across as silly if you ask these questions, yet you are not sure about what to do. We speak to Paul Britto, a fitness expert from Gold's Gym, who answers some of the most common queries.

Is it only when I start sweating that I will begin to lose calories?

Sweating has no relation to burning calories or your body getting a proper workout. Paul tells us, "Sweating is a natural way by which your body keeps its internal temperature cool to deal with the heat generated when you workout. While some people sweat, some do not and it has nothing to do with burning calories." If you believe that you need to generate a large amount of sweat to have a 'good' workout, it is time you changed your mindset. Paul adds, "People respond differently to various intensities. At any level

of intensity, your body is getting the benefits of the exercise regardless of whether you're sweating or not."

Should I eat before I begin my workout?

It depends on when you eat your food. Paul tells us, "If you eat 15-20 minutes before your workout, it makes absolutely no sense and you should avoid this." Make sure that there is a gap of at least an hour between eating and exercising. "The best food options include complex carbs which are a really good source of slow releasing energy," Paul says.

When I feel a slight pain during my workout should I stop or should I go on till the pain becomes unbearable?

Paul tells us that there are three common situations where you may experience a slight pain in your body — when you are pushing yourself too hard, when you are exercising incorrectly or when you are actually injured.

Quite obviously, if you are injured you should not work out at all, or at least not exercise the injured part. When it comes to

pushing too hard, Paul says, "When you start experiencing a minor pain while doing repetitions of a particular exercise, it is an indication that you are nearing your body's limit for that exercise. Take a break and go back to the exercise when you feel your body can handle it." As far as exercising incorrectly is concerned, you will experience a pain almost instantly and you should consult your trainer to find out the correct way to carry out the exercise.

I feel heavy when I drink water. How do I stay hydrated?

Paul suggests that you keep sipping water at regular intervals instead of filling up your stomach at one go. It is important to keep yourself hydrated. At the same time, Paul warns against consuming energy drinks during your workout, as they can harm your body due to the high sugar content. After your workout, you can drink an energy drink if you're feeling zapped.

Is it true that walking for more than 30 minutes will actually harm my muscles?

Paul doesn't agree with the time frame but says that prolonged physical exercise can harm your muscles. He explains, "During the first 30 minutes, your body utilises energy from carbs. After that, energy is derived from excess fats. However, after 60 minutes there is a risk that your body might start using energy by burning fats from your muscles." So, it is safe to say that you can keep on walking without any harm to your muscles for up to an hour.

« KNOW MORE: DIET FOR THE MARATHON

Last week we told you how you should start preparing for the upcoming marathon. This week, **Dev Goswami** informs you about what you should keep in mind when it comes to your pre-marathon diet

Running a marathon requires you to have strict control over what you eat. Research has shown that when running long distances your body's energy requirements substantially increase as much as 10 to 20 times. Not only do you need to eat the right food, you also need to eat enough to sustain your body.

But before we begin on the topic of diet, Althea Shah, fitness expert from Gold's Gym tells us, "Completely eliminate smoking and avoid excessive alcohol when you are training for a marathon." Smoking will play an adverse role on your stamina while alcohol will keep your body dehydrated.

When it comes to food, carbohydrates become a little more important than other food nutrients. Althea says, "Eat a sensible, regular and balanced diet with a sufficient intake of complex carbohydrates." What you should include in your diet are foods such as rice, rotis, whole-wheat bread, pasta, potatoes, corn and fruits. All these foods are rich in carbohydrates and they should be a foundation for your diet as carbs are the best sources of fuel for your body.

While you do not need to change your eating routine completely, you must ensure that you have about 200-300 calories of carbs within two hours of completing a rigorous session of exercise. Also, Althea recommends that as and when you feel low on energy throughout the day, you should snack on carbohydrate-rich fruits such as bananas.

However, do not assume that since you need more food, you can consume food mindlessly. Althea warns, "Make sure that the amount of oils and sweets in your diet is reduced." You will also have to watch your fat consumption. For example, instead of having one slice of toast with butter, have two plain slices of toast. Similarly, have pasta with tomato sauce or other low-fat sauces instead of a cheese-based creamy sauce.

It goes without saying that you need to keep yourself well-hydrated throughout the day. Althea recommends drinking a minimum of eight glasses in the day. She also adds that a sports drink is recommended for an extra dose of energy if your training session exceeds 60 minutes.

AIR-CONDITIONED VS. NON AIR-CONDITIONED

"The belief that exercising in a non air-conditioned environment is better than an air-conditioned one is a complete myth. Just as is the case with sweating, air-conditioning keeps your body cool and I would go on to say that exercising in an air-conditioned environment is better than in a non air-conditioned one. A non air-conditioned environment can actually contribute to you getting dehydrated."

— Paul Britto, Fitness expert, Gold's Gym