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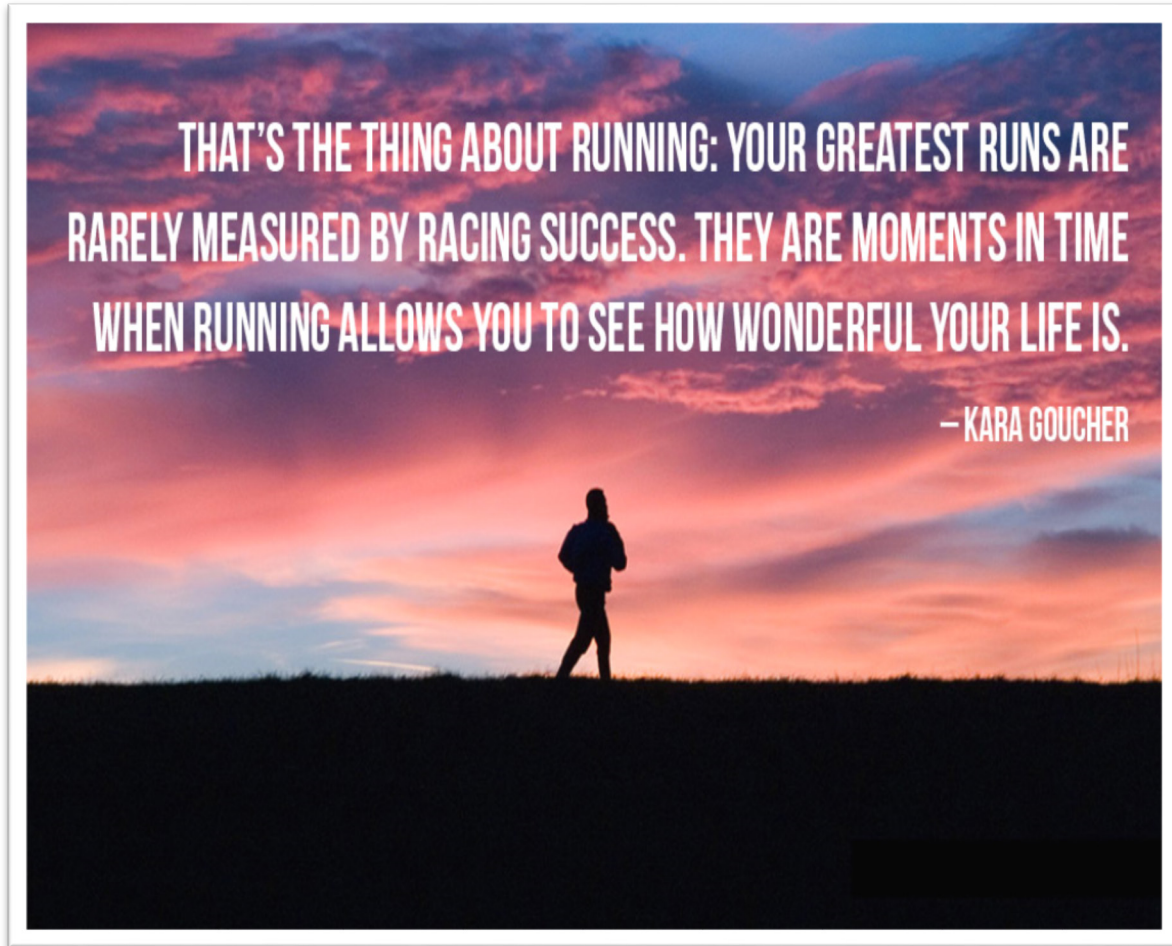
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INTRODUCTION



Dear New Customer,

We hope that you will enjoy your journey through our Ebook. You are special, amazing, and unique, never forget that.

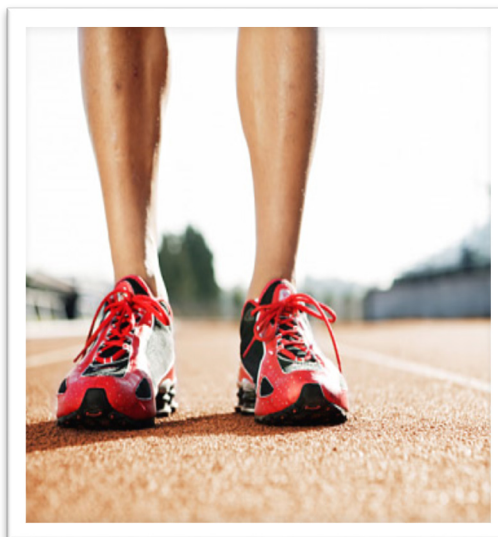
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ALL ABOUT SHIN SPLINTS

I SUFFER FROM SHIN SPLINTS, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Shin splints refer to pain in the shins - the front lower legs. It is an inflammatory condition of the front part of the shin bone. The pain is brought on by activity, more commonly in sports that involve running, with shin splints being reported to account for 12% to 18% of all running injuries.



SHIN SPLINTS HAVE TWO MAIN CAUSES:

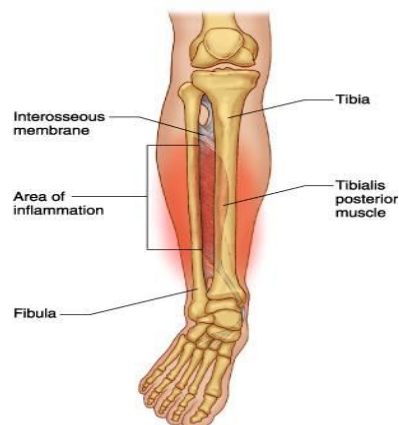
- Exerting excessive pressure on the lower leg muscles
- Excessive impact on the muscle

Pain is usually felt early on during the physical activity, dies down somewhat, and then returns later on, sometimes during the same exercise session; this may occur during a long run. The pain can gradually become so bad that the activity has to be abandoned altogether.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SHIN SPLINTS?

In most cases you will have a dull, aching pain in the front part of the lower leg. For some, the pain and discomfort emerge only during exercise, while for others it comes after the physical activity is over. Pain can also be there all the time.

The pain can be on either side of the shinbone, or in the muscle itself - this depends on the cause.



Signs and symptoms related to shin splints may include:

- Pain along the inner part of the lower leg
- Tenderness along the inner part of the lower leg
- Moderate swelling in the lower leg
- Feet may feel numb and weak, because swollen muscles irritate the nerves

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF SHIN SPLINTS?

The main cause of shin splints is too much force on the shin bone and connective tissues that attach the bone to surrounding muscle. The excessive force is usually caused by:

- Too much running
- Running with poor technique or poor biomechanics
- Running downhill
- Running on a slanted surfaces or uneven terrain
- Running with inappropriate shoes, including proper shoes than have worn out
- Taking part in sports that include bursts of speed and sudden stops



An increase in activity, intensity or period of exertion can easily lead to shin splints, if the muscles and tendons struggle to absorb the impact of the shock force, especially when they are tired or weak. Females have a higher risk of complications from shin splints, e.g. stress fractures, especially if their bone density is diminished, as may occur in osteoporosis. People with flat feet or rigid arches have a higher risk of developing shin splints.

PREVENTION OF FURTHER INJURY

A serious mistake is to try to "run through the pain" if it is a shin pain. This type of pain usually means there is injury to the bone and/or surrounding tissue. Forcing it more may worsen the injury and make the pain more intense and longer lasting. Shin splints are often shown to coexist with a stress fracture and so it is important to get a proper diagnosis from a Chartered Physiotherapist (Wilder & Sethi 2004).

You may be referred on for further investigations such as an MRI or X-Ray to rule out a potential stress fracture which can be serious if left un-attended. The easiest way to initially minimize further damage is to stop or minimize the activities that cause your shin splints to come on.

HOW TO TREAT SHIN SPLINTS – FOLLOWING THE ACRONYM FOR INJURY MANAGEMENT

Ice is an easy and effective way to help reduce your pain and swelling in your lower leg. It can reduce bleeding within the muscle and prevent tissue damage, making the recovery process quicker. You may notice that during the initial phase your shin or calf may seem warm or hot. Use ice packs with a **thin towel layer between the ice-pack and your skin** (never put ice directly on the skin) for 20 minutes at a

time. In the early stages of healing (within 48 hours of injury), you can apply an ice pack in 20 minute increments every 2-4 hours.

Anti-inflammatory medication (if prescribed by your pharmacist or GP) and natural substances e.g. arnica may also help to reduce the pain and swelling.



COMPRESSION

Compression is a key component in any injury rehab and prevention. Compression is believed to reduce muscle vibration and micro trauma to muscle tissues, brings more oxygen and nutrients to your shin and calf muscles, flushes out lactic acid and waste in the blood stream and keeps out swelling in joints, especially preventing blood from pooling in your foot.



As your symptoms improve, your Chartered Physiotherapist will recommend whether a compression sock or sleeve, bandage, supportive taping or an elastic calf support is most appropriate.

ELEVATION

During the healing phase of your shin splints, it is important to keep your foot elevated above your heart (where possible) to allow for gravity to help drain your calf and lower leg swelling.

If you follow these steps in protecting your injured leg appropriately, the inflamed tissues can be given a chance to successfully heal.



PHYSIOTHERAPY

Following a biomechanical assessment from a Chartered Physiotherapist, they will advise you on correct footwear and training and can provide a number of treatment options which will aid recovery from shin splints and future rehabilitation depending on your specific requirements.

These include;

- Stretching
- Foam rolling
- Specific strengthening exercises
- Massage
- Trigger point release
- Dry needling
- Orthotic prescription
- Advice on footwear and training



HOW TO AVOID SHIN SPLINTS

- Use proper fitting shoes with good support
- Make sure the insoles are shock-absorbing. If you have flat feet, good insoles are vital
- Avoid hard surfaces, uneven terrain, or slanted slopes
- Increase your intensity gradually
- Make sure you warm up properly before doing exercise

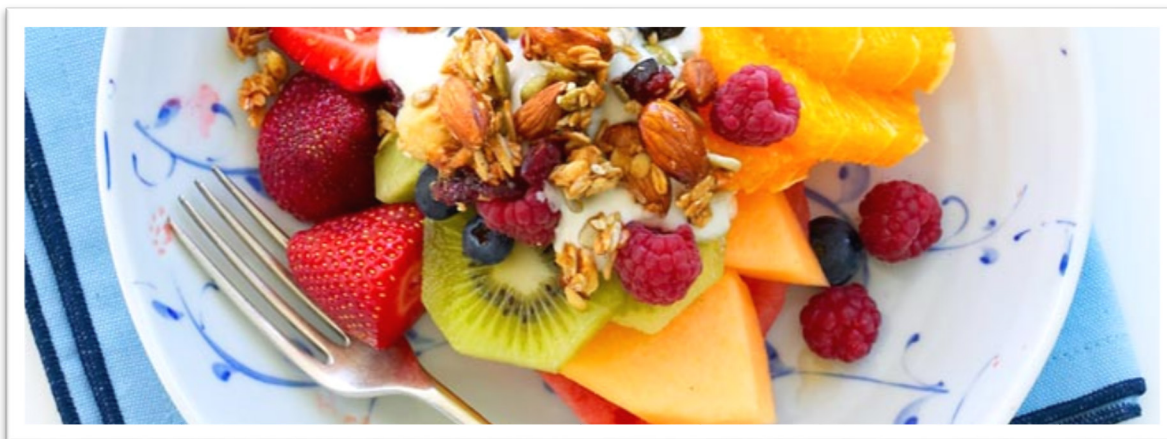
DANGERS OF SHIN SPLINTS

It is very important you go and see your Physiotherapist if you suspect you may have shin splints as it may be a different, more serious condition. Several conditions can cause shin pain, including stress fractures, tendinitis, and chronic exertional compartment syndrome.

1. If your shin splints are not responsive to treatment, your physiotherapist may want to make sure you do not have a *stress fracture*. A stress fracture is a small crack(s) in the tibia caused by stress and overuse. Imaging tests such an X-ray or MRI can help do diagnose this condition and will often show stress fractures in the tibia.
2. Tendons attach muscles to bones. *Tendinitis* occurs when tendons become inflamed. This can be painful like shin splints, especially if there is a partial tear of the involved tendon. An MRI can help diagnose tendinitis.
3. An uncommon condition called chronic *exertional compartment syndrome* causes symptoms like shin splints. Compartment syndrome is a painful condition that occurs when pressure within the muscles builds to dangerous levels. In chronic exertional compartment syndrome, this is brought on by exercise. Pain usually resolves soon after the activity stops.



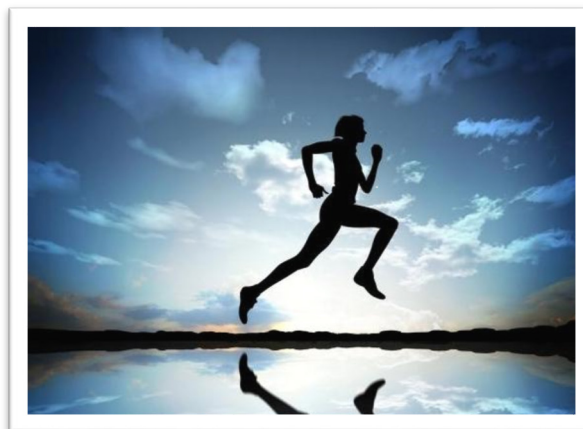
WHAT SHOULD BE IN A RUNNERS DIET



Proper nutrition is important among runners for two reasons. One is to supplement their energy to achieve power performance. And two is to meet their nutritional needs. However, runner's diet and proper nutrition are two of the most overlooked aspects of running that many runners, novices most especially, feel powerless and fatigued every time they run. When running, runners burn calories, or energy, and to be able to fuel their running, they need to replace the lost calories adequately. Taking the following, in the right amount and at the right time, will do the job.

CARBOHYDRATES

A normal diet should consist of 40% carbohydrates. For runners, however, the number should be anywhere from 60 to 65%, the reason being, carbohydrates are a good source of energy. Carbohydrates are converted into glucose and are then stored as glycogen. When running, the muscles use the stored glycogen to keep them energized. Sodas and candies provide



carbohydrates, only theirs is the so-called simple carbohydrates or those that give energy for a short period of time. What the runners need are complex carbohydrates because these produce energy for long-term use.

They can come from pastas, rice, breads, potatoes, and grains. Runners are recommended to take at least three grams of carbohydrates for every pound of body weight everyday. So a 120-pound runner should have 360 grams of carbohydrates daily.

FATS

Fats should make up 20 to 25% of the diet. Runners should take their fat requirements mostly from mono-unsaturated fats, or those that are liquid in form, as they are believed to meet sports nutritional needs effectively. Natural oils are good sources of mono-unsaturated fats. Foods with saturated and poly-unsaturated fats, such as red meats, butter, and margarine, are also good, but they should be taken in very minimal amounts. Foods with omega-3, an essential fat, should be also included in the runner's diet.

PROTEIN

To improve muscle stamina, runners are recommended to take .5 to .75 gram of protein for every pound of body weight daily. Proteins are not only a good source of energy, they also help in muscle growth and repair of broken muscles. Protein, which should be 15 to 20% of a runner's diet, can be acquired from nuts, eggs, fish, beans, grains, and low-fat dairy products.

WATER

Runners sweat a lot when running, a normal response to the muscles' rigorous workout. But in order to prevent dehydration, weakness, and, in more serious cases, heat stroke while running, runners need to constantly replenish the lost amount of fluid. The problem usually is that runners replenish only half of the amount. To be adequately hydrated, they need to drink water before, during, and after running. And whether thirsty or not, they need to continuously hydrate themselves throughout the day.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS

Recent studies pointed out that a runner's diet should have the vitamins A, C, and E. All three have antioxidant properties that can rid of free radicals. Calcium, which strengthens bones and prevents osteoporosis, and iron, which helps in the delivery of oxygen to all parts of the body, should also be included in the diet. Although most of these vitamins and minerals are obtained from supplements, foods are still the recommended source.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES IN RUNNING

One of the more important aspects of running is the proper way of breathing. Running is not just about the legs and thighs and feet. It is also about the lungs and how to bring greater amounts of oxygen into the system efficiently.

Unnoticed by many, even by the athletes themselves sometimes, the nature of your breathing during your running affects your performance. Those runners who can correctly deliver oxygen into their system are stronger than their counterparts who struggle when they are running because they do not know the technique.

SWIMMER'S BREATHING

One training technique is to breathe slightly slower than your body requires when you are not running. This starves your system for oxygen and forces the heart to beat faster.

After a time, the body learns to compensate for the lack of oxygen so that when this technique is not in use, your body is already more efficient in processing your breathed air. This is demonstrated in swimming.

Swimmers do alternate breathing which is breathing every third stroke. This enables them to breathe on alternate sides without taking a breath with every stroke.

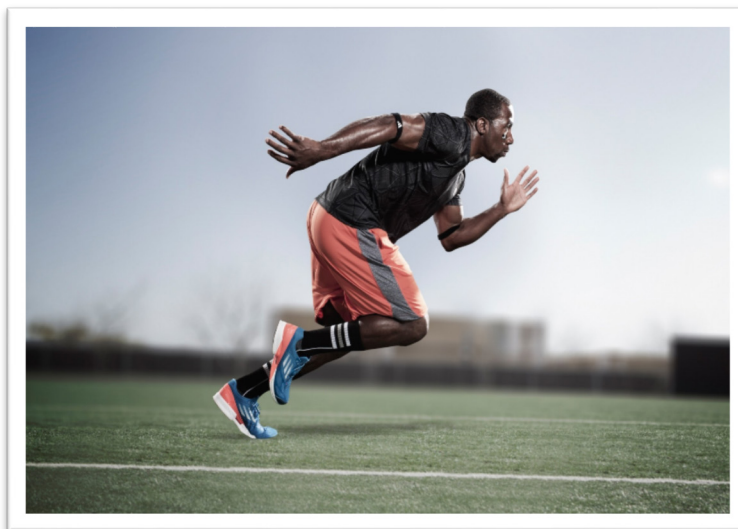
At the start, their body demands more oxygen, but will learn to adjust to the decrease in oxygen. In time, the body becomes more efficient in processing the limited air. Runners who swim often have excellent breathing efficiency.

BREATHING RHYTHMS

Sometimes, in long races (or even those short races) a runner may lose focus and is thrown out of his breathing rhythm. It could be caused by the simple forgetting to concentrate on the breathing or its pattern.

One way to avoid this is for the runner to time his breathing in rhythm with his steps. This is like the style of the swimmers who breathe at every third stroke.

Runners who get to this state can keep running like a clock, with consistent pace and a great deal of efficiency. This concentration on breathing can also take his mind away from pain or soreness that may have developed at this stage and can cause him to quit the race.



DEEP BREATHING

One other technique that can be used when running is deep breathing. It has several benefits when correctly done and practiced.

It helps the runner to stay relaxed, which in turn, helps to decrease fatigue. The ability to relax decreases the chances of performance decline.

Runners who forgot to relax find themselves making inadvertent changes in form until they feel the resulting pain. Examples include clinching of fists too tightly and running with the shoulders too high to be effective. This type of poor form often results in muscle fatigue and soreness.

Deep breathing helps promote relaxation while running. This is done by taking a larger-than-normal breath and exhaling all the way out.

During the exhale part, you should concentrate on releasing all the tension in your arms by shaking them, opening up your hands and moving your head in circles.

This combination of activities will give you an easy way to remain relaxed during the run and does not even need to break stride to do all of them. This is true to all the other breathing techniques in running – no requirement of great efforts but just as effective.

COMMON MISTAKES IN RUNNING

Running is one fairly common and simple athletic activity that most people can pick up anytime. In truth, most of us are already familiar with running. We think that starting a running program is also just as simple.

We simply start to run the next day, with resolve that we will do it regularly from now on. The resolve and the intention are decent. It is in the headlong rush that makes it fairly incorrect. It may even be downright dangerous.

LOOK BEFORE YOU RUN

If you think you can start out running five miles a day starting today is a good idea, there is something wrong in your personal decision-making policies. First, you have to know that exposing the body to sudden strenuous amount of exercise is outright wrong.

Never try to do any running right away if you have not run at all in your life, or worse, have not done any form of exercise, either. Depending on your age and your present physical condition, it can be harmful and downright dangerous.

First, get a professional opinion on your present physical health condition before starting out any physical activity, including running. Your doctor may even be able to help you map out your personal running program.

INJURIES

For a beginner, plunging outright into a running routine can earn you a host of problems. This can include muscle aches and joint pains, shin splints, and maybe stress fractures.

A better idea would be to start out low. You may first do a 1 or 2-mile run for three to four days a week. These runs can be interspersed with some brisk walking, if need be.

You can then build up your mileage in small increments every week, again so as not to subject your body to sudden strain it had not experienced before. The rule of thumb is not to increase your mileage by more than 10% every week.

PACING

Be sure to also know how you should pace yourself in our new sport. Newcomers are too excited in their new-found sport that they often make the mistake of overdoing things.

The tendency of new runners is to start out running as fast as they can only to find out they cannot maintain their pace.



Focus on your own pace, the one most comfortable to you. In any case, you have plans to increase them in the future. This can also help you maintain a uniform heart rate and improve your endurance.

Get some running experts and ask for more pointers. They would be only too glad to share with you every advice they know, including food and diets and schedules.

EQUIPMENTS

Every sport needs some proper gear and equipments, and running is no different. A proper running pair of shoes is very important.

Shoes that do not fit, or are not designed for running will cause discomfort. It can also cause injuries. Get yourself into an athletic equipment shop and get all the expert advice on running shoes. Ask, too, how to break them in gradually to avoid blisters.

If you can follow these simple guidelines, you will not commit any mistake than is necessary. You will begin to have fun in your running, too.

COMMON RUNNING INJURIES - SYMPTOMS – CAUSES AND TREATMENT

Although running is perhaps the simplest form of sport and exercise, it is highly susceptible to injuries. Running injuries are not uncommon among runners—novice or long-time. And if you've been running for a while, you most likely have experienced any of these common injuries:

1. RUNNER'S KNEE

Also referred to as iliotibial band syndrome (ITBS), runner's knee is characterized by the tenderness of the iliotibial band (ITB), the connective tissue outside the thigh, and causes friction between the ITB and thigh bone. Runner's knee results from overpronation, overtraining, tight ITB either naturally or due to lack of stretching, wrong shoes, weak hip muscles, and too much hill running.

People with runner's knee feel pain and inflammation outside the knee. Pain is most pronounced when running downhill or on cambered surfaces, when knees are stretched, and even when simply walking upstairs and downstairs. At the onset of pain, running must be immediately stopped. Intake of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID), cold therapy, and massage can reduce the pain. In severe cases, especially when the injury does not respond to any treatment or rehabilitation, corticosteroid injection is performed onto the site of injury.

2. SHIN SPLINTS

Shin splints is a widely used term to refer to the pain at the front of the lower leg. The injury is commonly caused by oversupination, overpronation, intense running, bad footwear, running on hard surfaces, and poor ankle flexibility. Runners with shin splints experience pain inside the lower half shin, which usually extends to the knee, at the beginning of the run. The pain subsides while running but comes back after with a more stabbing intensity. Redness and lumps in the shin may also develop.

Treatment is centered around abating the pain, especially during the early stage when the pain is intolerable. It includes rest, massage, and cold therapy. Intake of NSAIDs is also advisable.

3. ACHILLES TENDONITIS

Because it is no longer considered an inflammatory condition, Achilles tendonitis is now often called Achilles tendinopathy. It is a condition in which the Achilles tendon, a band of tissues connecting the calf muscles—gastrocnemius and soleus—to the heel bone, is inflamed, and which may eventually cause degenerated tissue and scarring. Achilles tendonitis is generally caused by overworking the tendon, either by subjecting it to excessive pressure or forcing it to work under abnormal conditions. Factors include weak or tight calf muscles, excessive uphill running, overpronation, wrong shoes, abrupt changes in distance and speed, and weak ankle joints.

Achilles tendonitis is categorized into two: acute and chronic. The pain associated with acute tendonitis only lasts at the beginning of the run and may ease during and after the exercise. It doesn't stay for more than a week. Chronic Achilles tendonitis, on the other hand, can go for weeks and months. Pain is consistent all throughout the run and when walking up or downstairs. Tenderness and redness may be apparent at the site of injury. Lumps may also develop.

Like other running injuries, Achilles tendonitis can be treated with NSAIDs. Massage, heel pad, casting, ultrasound treatment, and rehabilitation are also effective ways to correct the injury. In the case of serious injury, surgery is performed to remove the scar tissue.

DRESSED UP FOR RUNNING

Running, one of the world's most popular sports, is actually the most ideal of them all. What makes it ideal is the fact that it is a very simple, healthy kind of sport and that it does not entail buying any expensive gear at all.

The benefits are the same but the investment needed is so low. With just the basics (clothing and a sturdy pair of shoes), one can simply get up and run.

Other sports need some very expensive sets of equipments (golf, rock climbing), while others need an organization for one to be able to join (basketball, football).

FOOTWEAR

The most important piece of equipment for a runner is a good pair of running sneakers. Quality is important because it avoids injuries and gives comfort while running.

For newcomers who are not savvy enough about running shoes, the best places to go to are stores that specialize in selling running shoes.

(Some athletic equipment stores are also big enough to carry a wide selection of these shoes. They are the second best ones after these shoe specialty stores, in case there are none in your area.)

Shoe specialty stores have clerks that are very knowledgeable about their only wares. Sometimes, these stores videotape their customers running on a treadmill first. This is to check on the customers' running styles before making any suggestions.

After making suggestions, the sales person may ask the customer to run in each of the candidate pairs to further determine what pair is best. (Of course, the customer will pick his preference according to what feels most comfortable.)

Socks are also recommended because they are part of the running gear. Socks that do not fit properly or are not designed for running can cause blisters and other foot injuries.

CLOTHING

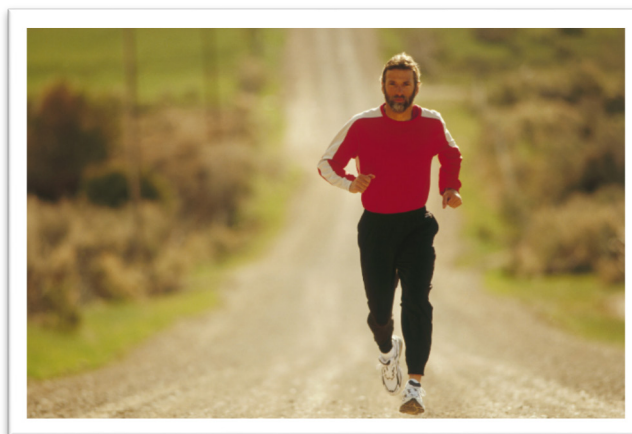
A runner should also invest in quality clothing fit for the season. Shorts or pants, shirts in short and long sleeves and with the right thickness should be carefully matched for each season that the runner intends to run.

Clothes which can wick moisture away from the runner's skin can help keep the runner cool and dry.

ADDITIONAL GEARS

Other pieces of clothing that a runner may bring along include such things as hats and raingears or extra clothing designed for wind protection and other weather situations.

Hats with wide brims protect the eyes from the sun. Waterproof jackets and pants are for runners who do not mind some rain and still do their running.



Some seasoned runners or those who are health-conscious bring with them gadgets to help them in their running program. Speed and distance monitors and watches designed for running are useful but not exactly very necessary.

Heart monitors help the runner tweak his program to ensure he is training at the right intensity. Speed and distance monitors give out data such as how far he has run and how fast his pace he is running.

These little devices (now installed with a GPS system) also allow storing information for future use or reference. Nowadays, some runners fight off outside noise distractions (and probably boredom, too) by listening to music while running. Safety experts, however, discourage this practice while running outdoors to prevent car accidents, muggings and other dangers.

FUELING YOUR RUNNING

Like a car, a runner who wants to operate at his most optimum potential needs his particular set of fuels. He needs the right combination of carbohydrates, proteins and fats to fuel his running.

Each of these food groups has a specific function to fulfill in the body. Getting the right amount and mix of these important nutrients is the right step onwards to success in your sport.

CARBOHYDRATES

The primary fuel for exercising muscles and for high-intensity exercises are carbohydrates. The athlete's body needs around 50 to 65% carbohydrates in his food intake to support training.

Lacking enough carbohydrates causes the body to under-perform and cannot burn fats as effectively as it should during workouts. It should be the staple of your diet before, during and after each exercise, including intervals throughout the day.

Carbohydrates abound in such food as whole grain breads, pasta, brown rice, oatmeal, fruits, vegetables, potatoes, corn, beans, and low-fat dairy products.

These days, many people make do with easily digestible carbohydrates from sports drinks or gels. Consult your sports nutritionist for the exact amounts of your carbohydrates requirements.

PROTEINS

Proteins are important because they build and repair muscles, ligaments, and tendons – all essentials in becoming a strong athlete.

You can get your proteins from such sources as egg whites, poultry (with the skin), fish, ground turkey or chicken breast, lean ground beef, game meat, nuts, tofu and soy milk and low-fat dairy products.

They are more important after workouts than before or during. This is because proteins help the body repair itself after strenuous activities like exercises and workouts.

The more you run (or train as an athlete) the more you need proteins to a point. Your needs depend on how many hours a week you run, or if you are trying to lose body fat or if you are lifting weights.

FATS

The last food group, fat, helps sustain prolonged exercises at lower intensities. Our bodies have enough stored fat to fuel prolonged exercise.

However, fat is difficult to use for quick energy. This is why carbohydrates are the choice fuel during most exercises.

Athletes need about 20 to 30% of calories from fats. Healthy sources of fats include fatty fish (salmon for omega 3 fatty acids), nuts and natural peanut butter, avocado, olive oil, and canola oil.

Unfortunately, most people get too much fat in their diets. What is worse is that too much of these fat come from unhealthy fats (saturated and trans-fats from sausages, burgers, French fries, donuts, sweets and many more).

CORRECT BALANCE

For an athlete, achieving the right balance of these three all-important food groups is the first step to fulfill your potential. Your day-to-day diet had to be adjusted accordingly to support your training.

Since everyone is different from the next person, it is important that your diet is suited to your exact personal body needs. You can only get these exact data from a nutrition professional how can develop and plan a personalized nutrition plan for you.

Remember, running (especially competitive running) can be as strenuous as any other energy use-intensive sports. Your body fuel should not be taken lightly.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST RUNNING SHOES

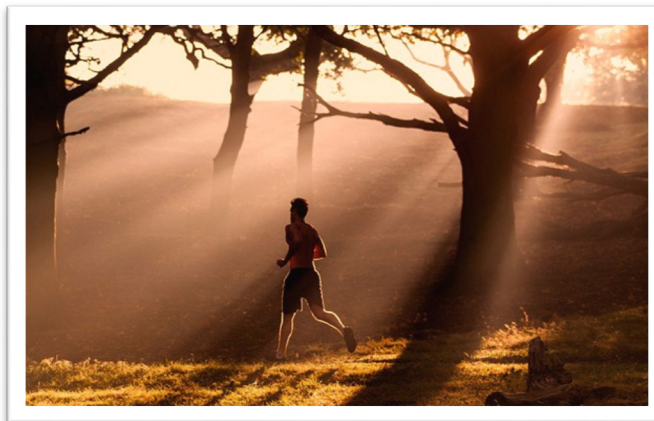
Although running barefoot was the preference of many running legends, it can't be denied that running shoe is your most important equipment as a runner. It acts as your first line of defense against any danger and injury, while helping you achieve your fullest potential. But because running shoes greatly affect your performance, choosing the best pair should be a careful process. To help you, here are a few buying tips.

1. Know your foot type. There are three types: neutral-arched, mid-arched (overpronators), and high-arched (underpronators). One way of identifying your foot type is by checking your footprint. A neutral-arched foot shows a distinct curve along the inside of the foot, which connects the heel and the toe. This type of foot pronates normally, meaning that when the foot lands, the outside of the feet rolls inwardly in order to absorb shock. The mid-arched foot, in comparison, rolls far too inward so that the print shows a slight curve along the outside of the foot.

Mid-arched foot print looks almost like an entire foot; hence, the nickname flat foot. Among the three, mid-arched foot is the most prone to injuries. High-arched foot, on the other hand, doesn't pronate enough, which is why its print has a very pronounced curve, showing a narrow band that links the heel and toe. Because the outside of the foot doesn't evenly roll inward, it gets much of the stress.

2. Choose the shoe that is compatible with your foot type. For neutral-arched foot, stability running shoes are appropriate. Made with supreme durability and cushioning, stability shoes offer medial support. Mid-arched foot runs best with motion-control shoes that function to reduce excessive foot inward rolling. Although quite heavy, they are durable, have firm midsoles, and adapt a straight shape for support. To promote foot motion, people with high-arched foot need to wear cushioned shoes. These have soft midsole and curved or semi-curved shape.

3. Take note of the size. And make sure that the shoes fit you right. Some runners, however, mistake the appropriate fit for tightness. But with tight shoes on, you might end up with blisters and black toenails. The shoe with the right fit has about half-inch space in the toebox, leaving enough room for the foot when it swells during a run. The



best shoe, without cramming it in, keeps the foot in place so that when you run or walk, the heel does not slip up or down.

4. Try the running shoes on. Run with them. Jog with them. Walk with them on a treadmill. In other words, never leave the store without finding how the shoes work in your feet. To make a better judgment, use the socks you normally wear when running. Another important point: Try shoes on in the afternoon, when your feet are in their largest size. And because both feet have different measurements, one is always larger than the other, make sure to measure both and go by the size of the larger foot.

5. Avoid being floored by style. When it comes to running shoes, function comes before style. So don't be tempted to buy the handsomest, most stylish, and latest pair in the market; rather, get the shoes that will most likely allow you to perform superbly.

HOW TO STAY MOTIVATED WITH RUNNING

As one ignorant non-runner said, running is boring, exhausting, and sometimes painful. Yet today, running is one of the most popular individual sports in the world, counting millions and millions of followers.

This number does not even include yet those who are engaged into serious competitive running. How do they keep themselves motivated and stay at that?

LOSS OF MOTIVATION

Because it is a solitary performance at most, running sometimes CAN be boring, exhausting and painful. Some runners (newcomers and veterans alike) declare that it can be difficult sometimes to stay motivated on a regular basis.

Loss of motivation is triggered by many things, including boredom, muscle pains, and most of all, lack of time. Some other times in your running years you were probably attacked by lack of motivation.

It starts out slow (skipping a run or two) and without your knowing it, gradually moves to a point where you notice you are not running regularly anymore.

GOALS

One of the better ways to fight loss of motivation is to set realistic goals. One of the more common goals to stay motivated is simply to complete a race.

Choosing your race, training for it, and finally competing in it is another good source of motivation. Your selection should depend on your personal goals. If motivation is your only goal, perhaps choosing to compete in those periodic short races is the best option.

Setting realistic goals is the easiest way for a runner's motivation to stay up and intense enough.

Of course, you can always choose your favorite distance (5K or 10K or a marathon). The choice itself, the thought, and the actual preparations and the competition proper are enough factors to keep you busy (training) and motivated (prestige and awards) enough.

Other runners are motivated by setting bigger goals to their training (if competing) or in just plain running. They set up faster times, or longer distances as their next goals. Naturally, they will not get it right the first time. The attempts of bettering them are very good motivators.

VARIATIONS

Runners can also stay motivated by adding some variety into their program. They can vary the courses (and terrain) they are running (jogging across the woods or the tracks), distance, speed and intensity (doing sprints in straight tracks and jogging in curves) among other things.



Running with a friend (in twos or threes) can sometimes perk up an otherwise monotonous activity. Thinking of someone going with you on a run can sometimes be a very good motivation to do it. Working alone makes staying in bed in a cold morning seems extremely tempting.

OFF TIMES

Occasionally, runners have to take some time off from running. This may look counter-intuitive but it is effective.

One way is doing some cross-training which can also help you stay in shape other than running. (This is aside from the fact that you DID take some time off from running.)

Add to your workout schedule a week for every two months perhaps of not running at all but doing another physical activity of your choice. The break from running makes you feel recharged and raring to go back running.

INDOOR RUNNING

Among runners, there are two opposing camps debating on the merits of running indoors, particularly on top of a treadmill. One faction is very vocal in its dislike of these manmade contraptions that are very popular equipments in spas and gyms.

The other group is equally at home running on treadmills as well as doing their jogging outdoors. These runners do not particularly like one over the other. Most often, the reason they give on why they use treadmills is convenience rather than preference.

Treadmills are preferred and popular in smog-filled urban areas and outdoor running are enjoyed by those in suburban places where smog is not yet a menace.

TREADMILLS

There are many reasons given by treadmill users and fans regarding their preference of the gym's most-used equipment.

Treadmills are consistent and familiar all throughout. Aside from the safety factor in running indoors, treadmill users like the familiarity aspect of the equipment. What is more, you can set the speed and the incline of the contraption. In treadmills, you do not have to worry about rains, extreme heat, or snow. In the comforts of a closed indoor space, you can work out to your heart's content.

You can safely wear your iPods and headphones and listen to your favorite music while exercising. (For relative safety, use of headphones for music listening had been discouraged for outdoor runners.)

RUNNING OUTDOORS

On the other side of the discussion, there are runners who will brave the most inhospitable weather like a heavy downpour rather than run on top of a treadmill.

For them, the visual stimulation of the sights afforded them during their runs adds up to the appeal of outdoor running. Some runners who can run up to 10 miles outdoors get bored after only a couple of miles on a treadmill.

MORE TREADMILL USES

For anti-treadmill runner, there are other ways to make treadmill use more exciting than usual. One can open some seldom-used controls of the machine and use them to your advantage.

One way is to incorporate sprints in your workouts. After warming up for about 10 minutes in a leisurely pace, increase the speed and do a sprint for about 2 minutes.

Afterwards, slow the pace and do some jogging for a few minutes until your heartbeat falls to about 120 beats a minute. Speed up the machine again and do a sprint for another 2 minutes or so.

Another way is to take advantage of the pre-programmed courses on most of the new models of treadmills. These courses include several changes in speed and incline. Runners who have tried them swear they are no different from those natural elements they meet in outdoor running.

Still another use of the treadmill for runners is to use them to train for faster speeds, say, if you are angling to enter in your local 5K run. Begin by incorporating short sprint intervals in your treadmill running starting as short as 30seconds of your desired speed.

Once the 30-seconds intervals become easy gradually elongate these intervals into longer and longer time frames until you can run the entire course at this speed.

Who says indoor running is boring?

LIST OF IMPORTANT RUNNING GEARS AND ACCESSORIES

People say that when you have a good pair of running shoes, you're good to go. This is generally true, but if you want to make the most out of your running experience, you need to invest on some things. Following are some of the important running gears and accessories that, although not required to make you a certified runner, can make your running comfortable and trouble-free.

1. **Shorts.** Many varieties of running shorts are in the market today, but there are two that seem to stand out from the rest. One is the compression tights. Resembling cycling shorts, compression tights are made of fabrics that fit the body tightly so that when the runner is on the move, the muscles are held firmly. This compressive feature offers little chance of chafing. Also a favorite choice among runners, full split shorts have a slit on either side, which allows for the free movement of the leg. Although split shorts are typically short in length, they provide runners with unobstructed and easy stride.
2. **Shirt.** Gone are the days of cotton shirts. Shirts with wicking quality, usually made of polyester, are the best choice for running. These types of shirt absorb sweat from the body and keep the temperature low. Thick, long-sleeved shirts are recommended for use during the cold climates and thin, short-sleeved shirts are for warm climates. For extra support and comfort, women are advised to wear sports bra.
3. **Socks.** The best pair of running socks prevents blisters. Other sock brands also promise to keep the feet dry and in perfect condition even after running several miles.
4. **Reflective vest.** When worn, reflective vest keeps the runner visible, making it very useful to people who run along the roadside or in the dark. It helps avoid accidents and calls attention when the runner is injured. In place of a reflective vest, some runners use reflective stickers, reflective jackets, and LED armbands.

5. Heart rate monitor. This is important to people who like to keep track of their heart performance and improvements in the pulse. With a chest strap and wrist unit, heart rate monitor displays information on the heart rate and calories burned. Depending on the results of the heart rate monitor, a runner can figure if his training is working and at an appropriate intensity.



6. Running watch. Because of its multiple uses, a running watch is almost a necessity. It can record distance, time, and pace. Most running watch models today also have heart rate monitor function, and those that are even more advanced have GPS capabilities. GPS watches can monitor route and distance information, which can be downloaded and stored to track performance. They are a bit expensive, though.
7. Running belt. One of the important running gears, especially among distance runners, running belt carries important items such as phone, keys, camera, and energy bars and gels. Most running belts are not bulky and do not bounce and budge while the runner is on the move.

LOSING WEIGHT WITH RUNNING

Running is one of the best ways of losing weight, as attested to by many experts and the hundreds of thousands of runners who had lost weight.

If your immediate goal right now is losing weight, running is one of the best alternatives. It is almost without cost. It might even be the cheapest weight loss program bar none.

THE DOCTOR

The very first person you have to see and talk about your plan of losing weight is your doctor. Only he would know for sure everything about you, your body, your health and the things that may be good or bad for you.

After you get your doctor's permission, begin to implement your plan of losing weight through running – gradually at first. For some, walking for a short period of time is a good start.

Walking will first help you improve your cardiovascular health. After which, you may begin to do some slow jogging. Follow this up with running after a time.

Your body needs to be familiar with the new regular activity. Your trainer and your doctor could give you a timetable.

SLOW AND GRADUAL

Once you are into regular running according to plan, you do not do sprints right away in the hope of losing weight faster. Also wrong would be to overdo the length or the time limit of your running, again in the hope of losing weight faster.

Starting out slow and gradual in your running program can give you the room to modify, change, or scrap some parts of your program until you are comfortable and satisfied with it.

CHANGES

Changing your workout routine is one very important consideration in your weight loss program. To those who do not understand this, there is a big tendency that runners might abandon their running routine at this time.

After some time when a runner had already been deep into his running program, the body stops losing weight.

The simple explanation is that the body readily adapts to any new situation and can become accustomed to a running program. By this time, the body becomes very efficient and only requires fewer calories to do the same amount of work.

The unfortunate side effect is that the body stops losing weight as well.

After weeks of running, and after losing some amount of weight, you may find that your weight loss slows down. Sometime later, you will notice that your weight stays as is, unable to lose a single pound.

One way to resolve this is to vary the distance, length or intensity of your running. You may increase the length to about 3 to 4 miles, or lengthening the time each day, or perhaps running at a faster pace.

Doing this can challenge the muscles anew. The body cannot become more efficient and has to burn some calories to complete the new additional requirement.

In addition, you can help challenge the body by doing some changes in your diet. A potent combination in losing weight is increased activity levels and dietary changes.

All in all, keep to your schedule and your program. After a while, your weight goal can be achieved and you will still enjoy the activity of running.

NUTRITION AND RUNNING

Running is one of today's healthiest ways to help maintain your body's physical well-being. It is one good cardiovascular exercise that helps keep good circulation and a healthy heart.

Everybody needs proper nutrition and a healthy diet. This requirement becomes more vital for people who are into health activities like running. This is amplified further for runners who are also into competitions or have special dietary needs.

NORMAL DIET

An average person's diet normally consists of 40% carbohydrates, 30% protein, and 30% fats. They also include such healthy components as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean sources of protein and heart healthy fats.

The daily calorie consumption of runners can also be modified, depending on the individual's needs – whether he is maintaining his weight, losing some or gaining some.

Combinations can be tweaked accordingly to suit the individual's needs.

RUNNER'S DIETS

For instance, a distance runner preparing for a marathon may wish to increase the percentage of carbohydrates in his diet. This is during those periods of intense training where he covers long and grueling distances every week.

On the other hand, a sprinter who is working to improve his muscle mass by way of weight training and other equally intense exercises have to include additional amounts of protein into his diet. This is helpful because proteins can help stimulate muscle growth.

CALORIES

The next factor to consider with regards to people who are into running are calories. There are basic guidelines on the amount of calories an individual should consume regularly.

These are based on the person's current weight and activity level. For runners who are into intense training, these might not be very accurate.

There are plenty of calorie calculators available online or you can get it from your doctor. Those are ballpark figures on the amount of individual needed calories. They can be good starting points for runners to find out if he is eating enough or not.

SAMPLE SCALE

An example would be a runner regularly consuming 2500 calories a day and running around 7 to 8 miles daily. If he still feels tired, he may have to increase his calorie intake.

If the runner is already at an ideal weight, he should strive to consume enough calories to maintain his weight.

Lastly, the quality of the calories consumed should also be carefully considered. They have to come from quality sources such as whole grains carbohydrates, lean protein sources, and heart-healthy fats.

The runner could always obtain his calorie requirements from foods rich in sugar and fat. But these food groups are not quality calorie sources. More likely, the runner will get his same amount of calories but he will feel sluggish and may not be able to perform well.

A case in point is a piece of cake that has an equal amount of calories as a turkey sandwich on multi-grain bread. Eating the cake will give him enough calories. However, the sugar in it will trigger the insulin response from his body, which can make him sluggish and less energized.

Nutrition is a very important component in such an activity as running. It is not just a question of energy but also of health.

PERSONAL TRAINER FOR RUNNING AND OTHER PHYSICAL TRAINING TASKS

Physical training is a complex task. It basically involves the basic and core muscles of the body. In dealing with these muscles, an individual must pay particular attention to proper execution of exercises. Even simple and practical exercises like walking and running require proper form in execution.

Rigorous exercises are not just effective in putting stress into muscles and consequently making the body parts bulkier. When not executed properly, bodybuilding activities can also be harmful. You probably have heard about people who incurred injuries when running. Injuries are inevitable especially when a person is too pressured to accelerate the manifestations of ideal physical training and weight loss results. Some people make the mistake of putting the body into too much physical activity in the hope that doing so would boost physical stamina, strength, and overall physique.

Therefore, experts advise physical trainers, especially those who are new to the activity, to hire personal trainers. Personal trainers are people who would be willing to attend to an individual's needs during physical training sessions. You need the proper guidance and tips of a personal trainer to make sure your simple activity (like running and walking) would bring about desired and targeted results to the body.

Personal trainers are professionals who are knowledgeable and well-trained about assisting people to appropriately execute exercises. Through their help, safe and effective training programs can be achieved. They are accredited to provide assistance to physical trainers within or sometimes outside the premises of the gym. They are knowledgeable of the basic physical training concepts and can even answer questions about recommended diet and supplements.

There is a need to hire a professional personal trainer when you are new to physical training and weight loss. Some individuals even hire personal trainers for longer duration so they could be ensured that every visit they make to the gym would be productive. They could also consult about how to make even the simplest exercises like walking and running tick.

When hiring a personal trainer, you must make sure that the person is holding relevant credentials or certificates in weight or physical training. Some trainers are even equipped with necessary college degrees, placing them in full authority to handle relevant issues and inquiries.

Some people hire personal trainers based on the trainers' physical appearance. A personal trainer, for some, should be buff and should possess a great body that could serve as a role or practical model. That way, the trainer would have credibility when talking about regimens and exercise strategies. However, some experts argue that the basis on physical appearance of personal trainers is insufficient. There are good-looking and muscled personal trainers who have attained the body structure from good genes or the intake of steroids.

Good personal trainers would always offer the option of working hand in hand with a doctor. By that, the trainer would determine what ailments the physical trainer is suffering from, and he would be able to design exercises that would be fit for the client. Even simple exercises like walking and running should be well timed, designed, and targeted for optimal and safe results.

RUNNING A FORM OF WORKOUT FOR THE LEGS AND THE BODY

Are you in search of a perfect workout to achieve the perfect shape for the legs and body? You need not consult your fitness trainers nor check out exercise workout regimens. In fact, you do not need to spend significantly in enrolling in a gym membership. The best workout that experts could recommend to you is running. It may sound a bit odd, but running up your stairs at work, home, or escalators should take a good part of your own physical training and rigorous daily routine.

Running up several flights of stairs could serve as an effective cardiovascular exercise. Doing so could surely help your body burn thousands of calories per minute. If there are stairs at home or on your way to the office, consider running up or running down them. When you start the activity, be sure to do it right. Yes, there is a proper way to run so you would not injure yourself and your body would reap the benefits of the physical task.

The first thing you should do when you are running is to check your own body posture. The body definitely needs to be upright. The shoulders should stay relaxed throughout the activity. Raise your feet as high as you comfortably could and at the same time swing both of your arms as you continue moving up (as in running up the stairs) or down (running down).

To make the activity a good form of workout, run about 20 steps up before walking down to where you started. Do the task for several times until you recover your own breath. Try not to run double steps at once. It is normal to run out of breath and feel too tired when running. You would notice that when you run regularly or everyday, your body could manage to comfortably run longer. In the process, your hips, thigh, and your abdomen would get better shapes.

When running up or down the stairs, do not forget the fact that there surely are risks or dangers in doing so. Be very careful especially in putting your feet on each step of the stairs. When you walk down, do so quite slowly, not too slowly. You may use banisters if you are feeling too tired and at the same time shaky.

Running up you stairs could in fact physically train most of your body muscles all at the same time. If you do so regularly, your fitness level could further improve quickly. Expect your overall personality to also improve, especially your mood. This is because for sure, your life would get brighter and better if you see many inches vanish from your waist. Initially, try running once every week. On the succeeding weeks, increase your workout. Run up to three times weekly. A 20-minute running session would definitely do your body good. However, as a form of warning, never run more than your body could actually endure. Do not compromise your overall safety when running.

RUNNING AND HYDRATION

Running in the good old days used to be uncomplicated and simple. Some people remember runners before going out running with nothing with them. After a time, they come back and drink their water.

Drinking (or hydration) was not such a big deal before. Today, there are some runners who carry their own water and enough gadgets to monitor their exact intake during a run or a race.

HYDRATION AND DEHYDRATION

Of course, we all now know how important water is when it comes to strenuous exercises like running. One thing about water is that it is not ideal either to get very little or too much of the fluid.

Severe dehydration (loss of water) and over-hydration both cause serious consequences on the body, including death. Knowing the difference is sometimes hard because the symptoms are the same.

SIMILAR SYMPTOMS

In dehydration, the symptoms include weight loss, lethargy, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, confusion and dry mouth or lips. Over-hydration includes weight gain or swelling, headache, nausea, lethargy and confusion or disorientation.

What is terrible is that nobody knows about the problem until the symptoms are already in the advanced state. Even medical personnel can be hard put in figuring out what exactly is happening. (This usually happens after a hard race.)

FLUID NEEDS

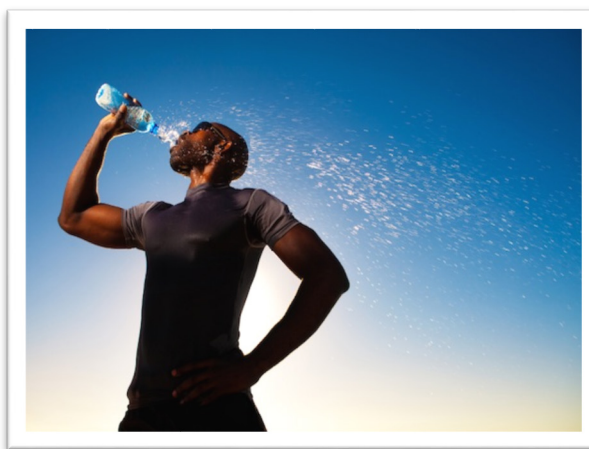
Knowing how much fluid you need can prevent either dehydration or over-hydration. One way of knowing is that your performance will decrease significantly if you are dehydrated by as little as 1%.

Your running slows down by about 2% if you are dehydrated by only 1%. Another point to consider is that hydration is important not just for your performance but also for your health. As a runner, you need to know how much you need to hydrate yourself daily, and in the critical times of before, during and after running or a race.

One formula given by experts to calculate your daily fluid needs is as follows: multiply your weight (in pounds) by 0.55 to know how many ounces of fluid you need every day.

HYDRATING FLUIDS

The hydrating beverages include water, sports drinks, tea, decaf coffee, low fat milk, yogurt drinks, juices, soda and soups or other foods with water. Water, of course, is the best source for body hydration. Intake of beverages with sugar and other additives should be limited, especially if you are trying to lose body fat.



Alcohol is one drink that significantly dehydrates the body. It is a total no-no to drink before races, or even the night before any race.

YOUR NEEDS

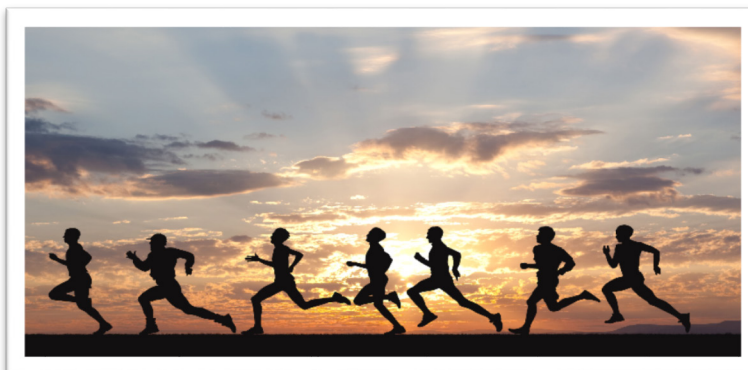
After your daily fluid intake, you need to know how much you need before, during and after exercise (like running) to achieve optimum performance. Most people need 8 to 16 ounces of fluid one or two hours before any exercise.

During exercise, your fluid needs depend on the rate you perspire which is different from person to person or the weather. The best estimate is to take 4 to 8 ounces of water every 15 to 20 minutes and weighing yourself before and after exercise. This is to check if you are losing or gaining weight, and adjusting your intake the next time.

Depending on its intensity, running is considered strenuous enough for your body to need more fluid than ordinary. Listen to what it says.

RUNNING AND OTHER EXERCISES IN EFFECTIVE WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS

Do you need an effective weight loss program? Fret no more. There are numerous weight loss systems that are designed to help you shed off unwanted and excessive weight. It is true that it is far easier to gain weight than to lose it. There is no doubt



about that fact. It is fun to eat and indulge in life's simple luxury: good food and sumptuous beverage. Then, after eating a lot, wouldn't it be just irresistible to take a nap or sleep? If you would get physically moving like walking or running instead, you could effectively help avoid accumulation of stored body fat, which is responsible for excessive weight accumulation.

The result of an idle or sedentary lifestyle: obesity or drastic weight gain. Unfortunately, when you have gained a lot of weight, losing those pounds would be very harder. Take note that starving yourself would not be enough. Sometimes, depriving yourself of food for a period would make the weight loss problem worse. There are two possibilities that could happen if you do that: one, you would tend to eat more once you give in to take food; and two, you might collapse or fall ill.

It is not advisable that you take those crash diets. What would be good for you is to get yourself working out to a very effective weight loss program. Nothing could be better than that. If you are embarking on what you think is an effective weight loss program, you should always remember that you are required to observe self-discipline. The weight loss program would not be effective if you would not have the determination to avoid fatty foods and stationary lifestyle practices.

There are also a long list of do's and don'ts. Of course, you would be advised to regularly do exercises. For the don'ts, you would be asked not to indulge in food that would be accumulated in the body as extra stored fat. You could ask a weight loss specialist about the perfect and effective weight loss program for you. Take note that the scheme should be complete. It should include dietary recommendations, exercise regimens, advises on doing of activities, habit recommendations, and sometimes, recommended supplements that are often in the form of appetite suppressors.

Programs do not always require going to the gym. Doing regular exercises would be good. Running, walking, or just moving around is an ideal form of physical exercise that you should do regularly or at least for several minutes in a day. Running and walking are good as they are good aerobic and cardiovascular exercises. The activities also do not incur costs. You could always run or walk for how long you like, anytime of the day.

If you are getting yourself into what you think is an effective weight loss program, you should initially consult your doctor or dietician. There may be activities, supplements or diet recommendations within the effective weight loss program that is not suited to your body functions. Remember, a weight loss program would only be effective if your overall health would not be compromised. Lastly, keep on running or walking daily. Such simple activities could be least costly but the long-term health advantages would truly be significant.

RUNNING AS PART OF WEIGHT LOSS SYSTEMS

There are logically numerous weight loss systems these days that are introduced and marketed to help people trim fats and excessive pounds. Many people note that these weight management systems are impressive and are well targeted. The most popular and proven effective are those that involve physical activities like regular walking and running. More emphasis is given to running, which is identified by experts as a good form of aerobic or cardiovascular exercise.

Perhaps, peoples' greatest concern now aside from earning more money is to have a perfect shape or a sexy body. And because fashion and sexiness have always been associated with well-maintained bodies, people think being skinny or slim is equivalent to being sexy and beautiful. Do not be surprised to see more people running around the open park especially in the morning. Running is a cost effective way to sweat and bring about cardiovascular challenge to the body.

Running is as effective as using a tread mill. In fact, this exercise machine has been developed and manufactured to facilitate running indoors. You must be wondering why tread mills do not fail to be included in basic gym facilities. Indeed, running is a good form of exercise. It is effective in making people sweat and in the process speed up metabolism of stored fats and calories.

Losing weight is not as easy as anyone could think. You would surely assert that it is far easier to gain weight than to lose it. How could you find and get the perfect weight loss systems that would help you attain your target weight? Choose programs that not only focus on diets. Systems with recommended physical activities and exercises like running would truly be more effective.

Because there are many weight loss systems now available and introduced in the market, all you have to do is to collect and then choose the system that would go with your preferences and lifestyle. There are weight loss systems that are too strict, while there are others that are easier to take. Some weight loss systems would recommend or mandate taking in diet pills or a weight loss supplement to suppress appetite. As mentioned, on top of the drugs, there would also be recommended exercises to be executed regularly, plus nutritional or diet plans.

If you are taking a weight loss system, it would be important to abide by the recommendations. Strictly following instructions and mandates of such weight loss programs would be of great help in ensuring that you would eventually attain your target weight. Incorporate daily, yet simple exercises into your lifestyle. Running in the neighborhood every morning is a good aerobic and cardiovascular workout to help the body accelerate metabolism and fat burning.

To choose the best weight loss systems, you could ask your friends or doctors for recommendation. Other than that, weight loss program providers usually heavily advertise their weight loss systems so you would not miss the programs. Online ad pages would also help you choose and purchase the weight loss system you are eyeing. Take note that the systems would surely help you get that ideal weight you are aiming to have.

If running, walking, or doing simple physical exercises are required by the systems perform the exercise tasks regularly. Nobody said losing weight would be easy. It could be hard to shed off excess weight but it would be obviously and logically be worth it.

RUNNING FOR WEIGHT LOSS - SIX FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

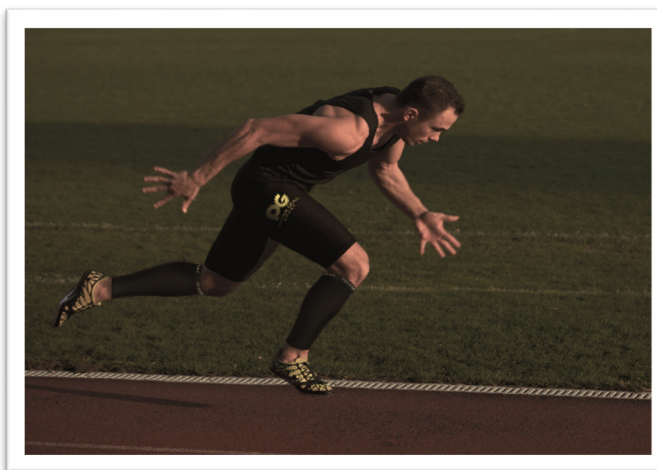
Because of the intense physical demands, running is proven to be an effective way to lose weight. And to some people, losing weight is their primary reason for sticking to a running program. But to effectively shed pounds, it is important to know a few facts about running for weight loss.

1. Running replaces body fats with muscle tissues. The latter, however, are denser and heavier than fats. Therefore, a few weeks into your running workout, you will discover that you don't drop pounds, you actually gain weight. It's okay. This only means that your running is working effectively. With continuous efforts, you will eventually lose the excess pounds.
2. Running is an efficient calorie-burner. In a study, it is reported that people who underwent a planned exercise burned 2,800 calories a week and dropped 30 pounds. On average, a 150-pound individual burns 100 calories per mile, and if a runner is committed to running five miles per day, he can lose more or less 500 calories daily, and 2,500 after five workouts a week. And that would mean a significant loss. But take note that caloric expenditure varies depending on body weight. A 110-pound runner may lose 80 calories per mile; a 200-pound may burn 150. Also it is important to remember that as the weight drops, the amount of calories to burn likewise drops.
3. Losing weight is all about burning more calories than you consume. Therefore, there is something to be said about watching what you eat. Remember that to lose a pound, you need to burn 3,600 calories, so stay away from foods that would give you higher calories than that. While you are on your running regimen, cut down on coffee, alcohol, chocolates, fast foods, and junk foods. You should instead consume more carbohydrates.

4. Running is effective if done regularly. If you are serious about losing weight, you need to commit to a regular running schedule and stick to it. One thing you need to keep in mind: running several days a week is more effective than one-day running, regardless of the length of time. Though daily running is ideal for losing weight, three or four days can meet the goal.

5. Intense running, or running at a fast pace, is effective in weight reduction. It has always been believed that slow running ushers you in the fat-burning zone. That, however, is negated by recent researches.

According to studies, intense running in fact burns more calories. But because it is likely to be more injurious, intense running is best done for shorter periods and should be scheduled, at the most, twice a week.



6. Running program needs to be modified to achieve the desired weight. You have to understand that the body gets used to the hard work overtime, becomes efficient, and therefore burns fewer calories. The body, in effect, stops losing weight. To achieve your desired weight, you need to incorporate changes in your regimen from time to time. Three things you can do: run at a higher speed, increase the distance, or run for longer periods. Remember, running for weight loss can be a little tricky, but if you stay attuned to your body, it becomes fairly manageable.

RUNNING HEALTH BENEFITS- A QUICK RUNDOWN

Why run? There are innumerable reasons. But the number one reason you should consider is the many running health benefits you can obtain every time you run. Now that busy and cramped lifestyles are pushing people to become more sedentary, running provides an easy and fuss-free avenue to getting fit and healthier. But although running proves to be tedious and rigorous, all the sweat is worth the following physical benefits:

1. HEALTHIER HEART

Your heart is responsible for pumping blood to carry oxygen to the body. When you run, you cause your heart to work harder, pumping more blood. Over time, running makes your heart more efficient so that even if you are at rest, your heart is pumping more blood with each heart beat. The arteries also benefit from running. As you run, the arteries become more elastic and more able to flush out the fatty deposits that may have developed in the walls of the arteries and that could potentially obstruct the delivery of blood to the heart. If not addressed, these obstructions in the blood's pathway can cause heart attack.

2. LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

As a result of elastic arteries, blood pressure among runners is usually low. In fact, a study involving an observation of long distance runners showed that these runners recorded almost a 50% decrease in the blood pressure. Their use of medications to lower blood pressure was also reported to have over 50% reduction.



3. LOWER CHOLESTEROL

Also according to a study, runners generally have lower cholesterol. When running, HDL cholesterol (the good fat) level increases, while the bad fat and triglyceride levels decrease. This results in reduced risk of heart diseases.

4. STRONGER LUNGS

Running makes your body more in need of oxygen, prompting your lungs to work harder by using 50% of otherwise unused lung potential. Running also increases the number of your capillaries, the tiny blood vessels through which blood passes to the lungs, and carries out respiratory functions more efficiently. The lungs then, when exposed to regular running, improve and eventually get used to working harder. The result is efficient breathing whether you are running or idle.

5. FIRMER MUSCLES

The most obvious benefit of running is toner and firmer muscles. This is because when running, you expose them to constant and rigorous activity and leave them fit and stronger. Regular running also improves muscular strength and endurance, making you more adept at handling activities that require a great deal of physical efforts.

6. STRONGER BONES

Although widely associated with age, osteoporosis, a condition characterized by hollow and brittle bones, is pointed to be the result of lack of exercise. Running can decrease your chances of suffering from osteoporosis and other bone problems. By keeping them always at work, joints and bones develop flexibility, endurance, and strength.

7. BETTER BOWEL MOVEMENT

Among the running health benefits, improved bowel movement is perhaps the least known. By increasing breathing, running helps in the wavelike movement of the bowels, making them easy to release. This prevents constipation and hemorrhoids.

SEVEN PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF RUNNING

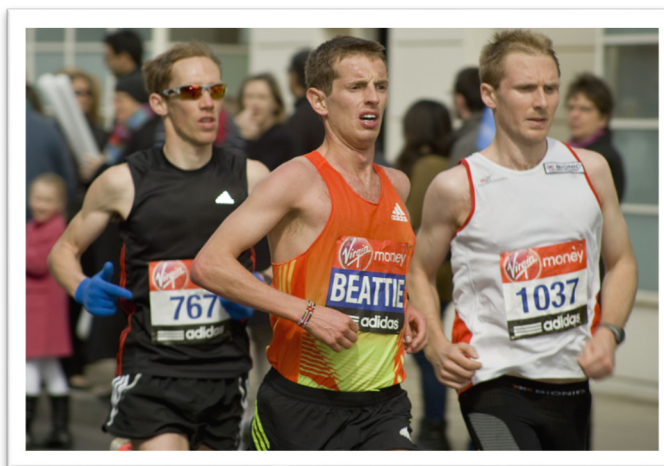
Running has been recommended by many doctors and therapists to people who are in the quest to improving their mental health. This is because running, like other exercises, unquestionably takes care of the mental health as efficiently as it does to one's physical well-being. There are many psychological benefits of running, but here are the seven most cited:

1. REDUCES STRESS AND ANXIETY

Runners are known to be less stressed and are more able to deal with their daily stressors effectively. This is attributed to the fact that running refreshes their thoughts, keeps their minds off worries, and gives them ample and undistracted time to think, reflect, and concentrate. In addition, according to some reports, running is more efficient in addressing anxieties better than medications.

2. ENHANCES MOOD

When running, the body produces a substance called endorphin (endogenous morphine) that creates a different sense of euphoria. This state of euphoria is called runner's high basically because after running, individuals are in a good mood, are happier, and indescribably feel better. Runner's high is also believed to be responsible for the runners'



seeming "addiction" to running: Because they are always intensely post-euphoric, runners keep running every chance they get.

3. IMPROVES CONFIDENCE

The sense of achievement after finishing a run or completing a target distance boosts the runners' confidence. This is especially true of people who are naturally competitive they regularly sign up for marathons and other running events. Improved confidence also comes to people who have noticeably lost weight and achieved more toned and firmer muscles through running.

4. FIGHTS ADDICTION

Running is conceived to be a natural tranquilizer, which is why therapists recommend it to those who are battling with their addiction. Many successful stories have been documented, saying that recovering patients use the time they would otherwise spend to satisfy their addiction in running. Through running, patients also become mentally stronger to resist the urge of alcohol, drugs, or anything they feel addicted to.

5. DEVELOPS MENTAL ALERTNESS AND FOCUS

Because running keeps the mind on the "now," the mind is trained to focus and concentrate. Running also relieves mental fatigue, sharpens memory, and improves overall mental stamina. Runners, in effect, are found to have better problem-solving skills and are more mentally alert than before.

6. RELIEVES DEPRESSION

Running is found successful in treating clinical depression. The act of running, according to therapists, serves as a psychotherapy, which gives the patients their own space to heal and connect with their selves better. They also say it is a good distraction from all depressing things. Other than depression, physicians also find running an effective therapy for people with other types of psychological disorders.

7. ENHANCES COORDINATION

The coordination of mind and body is improved with regular running. Whether running on a flat, paved surface or on an uneven trail, the mind is trained to harmoniously work with the body to prevent stumbling and tripping over. Like the other psychological benefits of running, better mind-body coordination is important in daily activities.

SMART WAYS TO PREVENT RUNNING INJURIES

Incurring injuries can pass as one of the greatest nightmares of many runners, which is why it is very important for every runner to be extra cautious down the road. Many factors contribute to the runner's tendency to get injured; still, there are many ways to prevent running injuries. Here are some:

1. Commit yourself to a warm-up. The general rule in any type of workout: Warm-up before you go. Doing so gives you a chance to prepare your body for the oncoming work and prevents the likelihood of injuries. Before a run, loosen up your legs, walk for some minutes, then do some stretching. Similarly, cooling down at the end of the run is important to reduce muscle pain. Do this by closing your workout with brisk walking or slow running. Then, do stretches.
2. Avoid overtraining. The surest way to incur injuries is to overtrain and overwork your body. Sadly, many runners, in an attempt to increase their mileage and intensity just too soon, pushes their body beyond its capability and so put their selves at a great risk of injury. Two things you need to remember. One, weekly mileage increase shouldn't be more than 10%. Two, speed buildup is a gradual process. Next time you feel like going farther and faster, ask if your body is capable of the demands, then let sound judgment overtake you.
3. Take some breaks. This is especially important if you feel soreness in your muscles or are overly tired. A day or two of missed run is better than subjecting your already fatigued body to a possibility of injury. Listen to your body well and take note of pain, or any other hint, that tries to communicate it is not up for the challenge.
4. Use good shoes. You know you need to replace your shoes when they have reached around 300 to 400 miles. By then, their shock absorption has degraded and their soles have worn-out, leaving them unsafe for running.

5. Keep from concrete surfaces. Not only are they hard, they also are not very good shock absorber. Instead, run on dirt or grass trails, or somewhere there is a soft surface. This will put less pressure on your legs. Also, avoid running up and downhill to prevent stressing your feet.

6. Do cross-training activities. The purpose of cross-training is to develop and strengthen your running muscles through other physical means such as swimming, biking, and hiking. It is best to incorporate cross-training activities in your running program at least once a week. Remember, however, that cross-training activities are supposed to improve your stamina and not to stress your body out and leave you with less energy for running.

7. Observe rehabilitation measures should you suspect any injury. Doing so will prevent injury complications and speed up the recovery process. You can do a massage and cold therapy to ease a minor injury. For more serious cases, consult with a doctor immediately. To further prevent running injuries, do not resume to running unless you are fully recovered.

THE MANY BENEFITS OF RUNNING

For most people, running is exhausting, boring, and sometimes painful. However, you see today so many people running as if their lives depended on it. (That is actually true to a point.)

There are many reasons why people engage themselves in running these days. Foremost of which is to stay in shape or to reach their ideal body weight. Studies show that the potent combination of correct diet and the right exercise is the most effective method in losing weight.

WEIGHT LOSS



For all its boring features, running is very effective in allowing a person to burn an average of 100 calories for every run mile. Biking and walking, on the other hand, only burn a fraction of these calories in the same amount of time.

While we burn around 2000 to 5000 calories every day doing

nothing, running 5 miles a day burns an additional 500 calories.

The speed in running has little or no effect on the number of calories burned. Rather, it is weight that counts. A 220-pound person running an 8-minute mile burns 150 calories. A person weighing 120 pounds running the same pace burns a measly 82 calories.

Understand that a person needs an excess of 3500 calories in order to gain a pound. This means you need to burn that much number of calories in order to lose a single pound.

OVERALL HEALTH

Another motivation that drives runners is the health benefits they get. Running helps lower blood pressure by maintaining the elasticity of the arteries. During a run, the arteries get exercised as well, what with all the blood moving about.

Running also maximizes the lung's potential, keeping it strong and powerful. Deep breaths force the lungs to use more tissues, but half of both are unused. Running makes the lungs use almost all of its tissues.

Running also strengthens the heart and helps prevent heart attacks. During a run, the heart muscles are exercised, thus keeping it fit and strong by itself.

The heart of an inactive person beats 36,000 more times every day compared to that of a runner. The reason is simple – the runner's arteries are wider and blood flows smoother.

ENDORPHINS

Most runners keep this secret to themselves: running gives an intense exhilaration and euphoria right after a run. And they are addicted to the feeling and it motivates them the most.

Science had already found out the nature of this natural high: beta endorphins. These are released by the body's neurons intended to relieve the pain after a run. It creates a feeling of extreme happiness and exhilaration and can be so intense it often can replace other addictions to drugs, alcohol, including appetite for food.

NATURAL TRANQUILIZER

There is a trend for doctors now to recommend to their patients suffering from clinical depression and other psychological disorders to try running. This is based on studies that show running as a natural tranquilizer.

Patients are reported to be less tense, less confused, less depressed, and less fatigued.

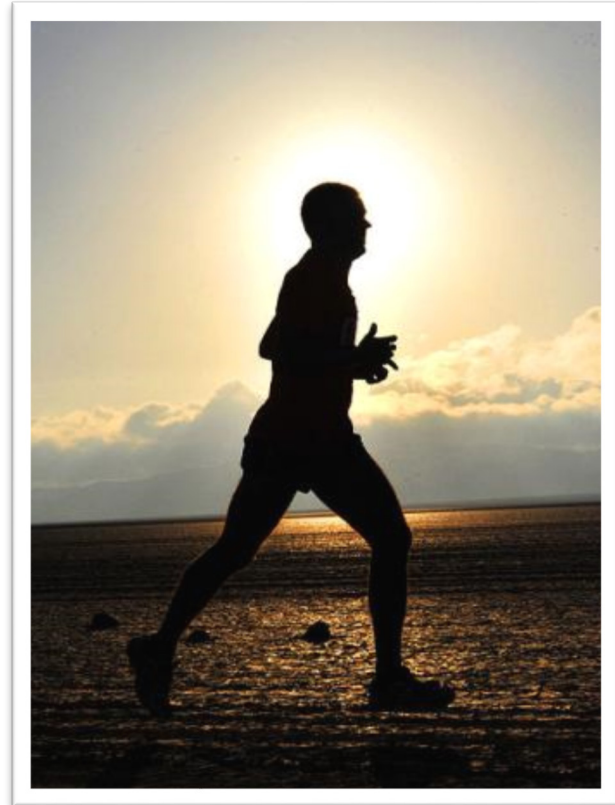
Whatever your reasons for running are, it is a safe bet that it is one of the best natural disease-fighters man had discovered. What's more, it's free and it's delirious as well.

THE RIGHT START RUNNING TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

Running is an enjoyable, low-maintenance sport that it is no surprise many are enticed to get into it. Many beginning runners, however, initially find running somewhat injurious and exhausting and so give up. Truth is, it can be, especially if the novice runners have not been properly educated. To get the most out of running, it is important that every beginning runner knows everything about the sport and is prepared enough for it. Following are some running tips for beginners that will make an otherwise rigorous sport into a pleasurable activity.

1. Consult with your physician. Remember that running is an intense physical activity and requires a great deal of your strength. Therefore, it is wise to ask your doctor if your body is up for the challenge. Your physician will consider your age, weight, fitness level, and special conditions (breathing or heart problems) to derive a sound decision. Having accurate information on your body will also help you in choosing a running program.
2. Set attainable goals. Do you want to lose weight? Or lower your cholesterol level? Or join a marathon perhaps? Whatever your goals are, make sure to see them through. To keep you motivated, it is helpful to have a timeframe. If the goal, however, is not met at the appointed time, it's okay. Don't fret, but continue to try working on it. The key here is to avoid stressing yourself over a goal your body is not ready for.
3. Have a running program. Three things you need to consider in selecting a running program: age, fitness level, and goals. These three will determine the distance you can handle. You have to realize, however, that as a beginning runner, you are not expected to run a mile. In fact, you won't do much running at first. Especially if you are untrained, running a distance may make you an easy target for injuries. Run/walk program, which includes alternate walking and running for a particular time, is ideal for starters. As you progress week by week, you can increase the time for running and decrease the time for walking.

4. Make a running log. Detailing all the basic information on your run, a running log will serve as a record of your progress. You can write the type of workout for the day, time, and distance. For instance, Day 1, you did a tempo run for 20 minutes, 3 kilometers. Day 2, you had long run for 45 minutes, 8 kilometers. If you want your log to be more detailed, you can also record your weight and pulse rate.



5. Check your pace. This is perhaps the most important among the running tips for beginners. This is because many beginning runners injure themselves by breaking into fast running too soon. As a beginning runner, your goal is not speed, but increasing your running time. Maintain your running at a pace that enables you to keep a conversation; anything more than that is not advisable. When you go for slow, easy running, you are actually building your stamina, which will eventually enable you to run faster and longer distances.

TIPS FOR LONG DISTANCE RUNNING

Are you shooting for your first long distance running event? For some long-time runners, training for such an event—5 kilometer, 10 kilometer, half marathon, or marathon—is not so much of a problem. For first-time distance runners, however, training is quite laborious and boring. If you are currently undergoing training, the following tips can help you get by and prepare you for an experience as exciting as long distance running:



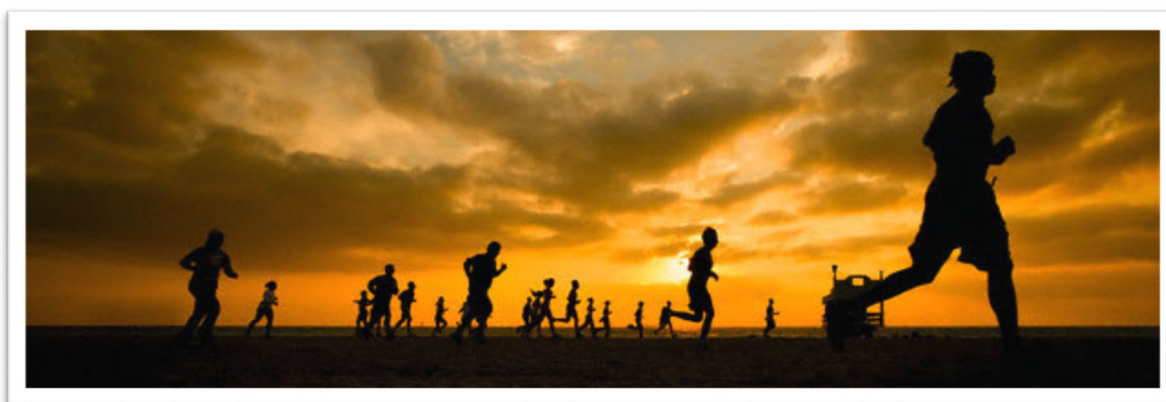
1. Take some rest days between the trainings. Doing so will give your body ample time to recover energy and reestablish muscle stamina. Some runners have a week or two of rest in between days of hard workouts. For relatively easy workouts, they schedule at least one day-off.
2. Mind your pace. Running long-distance is less about running fast, but is more about covering as many miles as you can. To be able to do this, you need to conserve your energy and run slow during the first few miles. Change your pace as you progress and approach the finish line.
3. Work on improving your speed. Allot two to three days of fast running per week. There will be times, however, that your body won't feel like working at a faster speed. Don't push, as your body is trying to recover energy.

4. Increase your mileage. Successful distance runners increase their mileage at a gradual pace. Some of them add two to three miles after every week of training, while others have an easier approach, only adding a few more strides at the end of every run. But because your body works differently, you can design or look for a training plan that can help you increase your mileage at a proper intensity.
5. Put some diversity. To take the monotony out of your training, make sure to run different routes from time to time, run at different paces in a single session, and run at different paces on given days. The thing is, because running is most likely the same each day, you need to make it a little more exciting, something you always want to look forward to.
6. Have a running partner at certain points of your run. It's okay to run solo, some runners even prefer it, but without someone to talk to the entire run, training gets impossibly boring. Try to catch up with someone, or agree to meet with a fellow runner halfway through the run. Of course, you have to be willing to change your pace to encourage small talks.
7. Listen to music. Long distance running is a mental activity as much as it is a physical challenge, so you need to get motivated and inspired to keep your body moving. Music does it well by keeping your mind off the physical discomforts of running and relaxing your mental state. During a run, bring an mp3 player with you and load it up with inspirational or your favorite music. Make sure your player has enough battery life to last the entire run.
8. Bring energy foods with you. Not only will they pump up your energy level, they also will give you something else to do other than running. It is also wise to have water or energy drink to keep you hydrated during your training for long distance running.

TIPS FOR RUNNING A GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

Have you decided running regularly as a form of practical workout for your weight loss or physical training activity? You are on the right track. Running is truly a good and practical activity that could provide your body with an ideal cardiovascular or aerobic exercise. Running could make you sweat profusely, a sign that your body is metabolizing faster and burning up excessive stored fats. But you should not just run. You have to do it right and do it safely. If you are beginner, here are several useful tips to serve as your guide.

First tip: It is the right time to start running. Running and all other physical exercises are good for your body whatever your age is. Regular exercises could provide ideal benefits: you would have more energy; the chances of developing a heart ailment would be decreased; you could sleep better and get more relaxation; and you would be able to lose weight. It would never be too late to start running.



Second tip: Consult your doctor. Prior to starting running and other exercise programs, it would be appropriate to drop by your doctor's clinic. Try to do so more especially if you are suffering from heart problems, obesity, breathing problems, and chronic fatigue. Your doctor could advise you on how to get proper pacing and could guide you on how long you should keep running per session. It is not safe to overdo running.

Third tip: Begin with a simple running or walking program. It is not advisable to start on a high level. Humbly start at low-levels. You may run or walk shorter distances when beginning the running program. You may also opt to run at least once a week initially. As you go on, you could slowly increase the distance, the duration, and the weekly frequency. Notice that as you go on with your regular running exercise, your body could take greater distances and endure longer sessions. You are increasing your body's resistance.

Fourth tip: Monitor your pulse rate. Running and other exercises when done properly could help the heart beat less. This is because the heart is properly trained. When the heart beats slower especially during your relaxed hours (like bedtime or after waking up in the morning) it means the heart is successfully pumping more blood throughout the body in every beat. Perform a simple test. Get your heart beat per minute everyday, immediately after you wake up in the morning. If your pulse rate is higher today than yesterday, it means you are overdoing your exercise. Continue your running program when your heart beat normalizes.

Lastly, listen to your own body. After running, it is normal to feel tired. There could even be tolerable muscle pains. Be alert when you feel dizzy or experience chest pains after the activity. That may mean you have overdone it and you have reached or exceeded your threshold. When such adverse feelings occur, cut back on the training load and immediately seek the opinion of your doctor.

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