

SAFE RUNNING

Running injuries are quite common. But they can be reduced if you follow the proper conditioning and training programs; wear the appropriate apparel and footwear; and are aware of your running environment. Follow these guidelines to prevent injuries.

- Plan a progressive running program to prevent injuries. A five-minute warm-up (which should raise your temperature by one degree) followed by stretching exercises, is essential before starting a run. Following the run, stretching again is important.
- During hot weather, run in the early morning or evening, to avoid heat exhaustion. Do not run when pollution levels are high.
- Start your run with the body feeling "a little cool" since body temperature will increase when you start running.
- You can lose between six and 12 ounces of fluid for every 20 minutes of running. Drink 10-15 ounces of fluid 10 to 15 minutes prior to running and every 20 to 30 minutes along your route. Weigh yourself before and after a run. For every pound lost, drink one pint of fluid.
- Run in the shade if possible to avoid direct sun. If exposed to the sun, apply at least #15 sunscreen. Wear sunglasses to filter out UVA and UVB rays, and wear a hat with a visor to shade your eyes and face.
- In high altitudes, runners should gradually acclimate themselves to lower oxygen levels, by slow, steady increases in speed and distance.

- When selecting a running shoe, look for good shock absorption and construction that will provide stability and cushioning to the foot. Make sure that there is a thumbnail's width between the end of the longest toe and the end of the shoe. Buy shoes at the end of the day when the foot is the largest.
- Sixty percent of a shoe's shock absorption is lost after 250-500 miles of use, so people who run up to 10 miles per week should consider replacing their shoes every nine to 12 months.
- Excessive clothing can produce sweating, which causes the body to lose heat rapidly and can increase the risk of hypothermia. Instead, dress in layers. The inner layer should be material that takes perspiration away from the skin (polypropylene, thermax); the middle layer (not necessary for legs) should be for insulation and absorbing moisture (cotton); the outer layer should protect against wind and moisture (nylon).
- To avoid frostbite in cold weather, do not have gaps of bare skin between gloves and jackets, wear a hat, and cover the neck. Petroleum jelly can be used on exposed areas, such as the nose.
- Do not run at night, but if you run at dusk or dawn, wear reflective material. Don't wear a headset or jewelry while running.

- Run with a partner. If alone, carry identification, or write your name, phone number, blood type, and medical information on the inside sole of your running shoe.
- Let others know where you will be running, and stay in familiar areas, away from traffic. Have a whistle or other noisemaker to use in an emergency and carry change in case you need to make a phone call.
- Whenever possible, run on a clear, smooth, resilient, even, and reasonably soft surface. Avoid running on hills, which increases stress on the ankle and foot. When running on curved surfaces, change directions in forward movement, so that you have even pressure on both feet during the run.