

Newsletter

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GOOD and BAD RUNNING

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It is important that you receive information which will help you prevent injuries. You should expect this as part of the service you receive from your health care providers. Just as your grandmother reminded you that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", or that other old saying that declared, "a word to the wise is sufficient," the information here can help you avoid problems if you are among those just beginning a running program.

Rule #1 – Do not begin a running program without first having a health assessment by your health care provider to establish that you are in sound enough physical condition to begin the bodily stresses that come from initiating such a program.

As you begin your running, you will have a lot of new things on your mind. Knowing some of the good habits at the beginning of your program will save you from injury and from relearning and retraining later.



Here are a few of the things you should review during the first weeks and then again periodically as your running career develops.

Good running habits

1. Select shoes that are specifically designed for running and make sure you have proper room for your toes and a good built-in arch support if you do not use proper orthotics.
2. Use clothing that is appropriate for the weather such as a light shirt and shorts in summer, jogging jacket and pants in autumn and rainwear as necessary.
3. As a beginner you should choose a trail that is relatively flat and without any banked edges.
4. As you run, your arms should swing freely and feel relaxed; your elbows should be slightly bent; hands should not cross in front of your chest and your shoulders should be down, at a relaxed level.
5. You should be able to run with an upright posture that does not flex, bend or twist and turn as the legs carry you along.

Bad running habits

1. Shoes that are in ill repair, do not fit or have not been worn for a long time.
2. Inappropriate clothing can lead to an excessive loss of body fluids in warm weather or chills and pulled muscles on cooler days.
3. Uneven or hilly surfaces can lead to unnecessary strain or injury.
4. Your arms should never criss-cross in front of you as this will lead to mid-back pain and neck ache as well as impeding your breathing.
5. It is not just poor form to run with a bend at your waist, it is a terrible strain on your low back and leg muscles; often leading to recurrent severe muscle spasms and low back pain.

Rule #2 – Once you decide to begin a running program, the best and most serious advice to give you is that prevention and early treatment of running injuries are the best keys to long-term success. Your health care provider can provide you with a game plan and running program essentials such as:

- Stretching exercises which are geared to easing and preventing many running injuries.
- Strengthening exercises to ensure that the muscle groups are both strong and in balance.
- Orthotic devices, which are customized for only your feet and will compensate for any bio-mechanical imbalances that can lead to strain or injury.

As always, your chiropractor will be there to provide treatment and rehabilitation therapy should you become injured. The old words of wisdom should continue to be in the back of your mind for running just as they are for any other athletic-type injury: When you suddenly suffer a sprain, stop and rest, apply ice for 10 minutes at a time, call your chiropractor.