



Team Fisher House Training Information

How can you make it to the starting line uninjured? During the months of pounding the pavement, an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure. It has been reported up to 66% of runners suffer an injury every year, which is the highest injury rate of any sport. Here are the top ten tips to prevent running injuries (big and small):

10) **Plan for your run and dress appropriately:** Add 15-20 degrees F to the temperature when determining what clothing you should wear. When you first step out the door, you should feel a little cool or under-dressed. Consider the [wind chill factor](#) if it is less than 40 degrees. Avoid cotton garments, which hold sweat and get heavy. The more technical moisture wicking garments are worth their price, and will reduce chaffing. Good fitting comfortable running shoes will minimize impact forces and provide stability. Studies have shown shoes that meet these criteria are likely to provide optimal levels of cushioning and stability. A local running store is your best resource.

9) **Lubricate:** Even the right clothes can rub you the wrong way, so as the miles increase, don't forget to lubricate. Vaseline, Body Glide and Utterly Smooth are just a few choices runners use to grease up. And men, don't forget to apply nipples guards, band-aids or tape to prevent the painful bleeding nipples. Our shirts absorb sweat, and then water evaporates, and leaves behind the salts, which turn our shirts into sandpaper. A few miles of sandpaper rubbing on smooth skin will leave it raw and bleeding. It not only makes the run uncomfortable, but the post run shower is excruciating.

8) **Plan for the weather:** Avoid peak sun hours (10AM to 4PM). Consider wearing a [sun runner hat](#) or [desert hat](#) if you are running during peak sun hours, in order to protect your ears and neck. Run in the shade if possible, apply sunscreen, and wear a hat and sunglasses to protect your face. Sweating can increase skin's sensitivity to ultraviolet radiation, increasing sunburn potential. Some studies have shown an increased risk of skin cancer among marathon runners.

7) **Be Safe:** If possible, run with a partner. If running alone, carry identification, or write your name and phone number on your running shoe. Let others know your run route, and stay in familiar locations. Always run *TOWARDS* traffic, so you can see approaching cars. I always run with my cell phone and a laminated copy of my driver's license.

6) **Add Cross training:** Try cycling, swimming, or aerobics. A non-running activity prevents boredom, works different muscles, and gives running muscles and joints a break. An upcoming article will review the best type of cross training exercises to improve your running.

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Please note that the information contained in the Team Fisher House training updates are the opinions expressed by the Team Fisher House Training Support Staff, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other running "experts" or doctors. Therefore, it is advised that you seek additional support from knowledgeable specialists in your community if you require any training modifications or medical care. *Remember, it is wise to consult your doctor before starting a new exercise program.*



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5) **Build More Strength:** Injuries can occur when the focus is on running muscles and not on the whole body. For example, knee injuries are frequent because running focuses mostly on strengthening the back of your legs. The weaker front leg muscles (quads) aren't strong enough to keep the kneecap moving in its proper groove, which causes pain and leads to increased injury risk. However, once you strengthen your quads, the pain will often go away. Maintaining muscle strength can help preserve running speed as we age. All it takes is one or two 30-minute weight-training session per week. Include upper- and- lower-body exercises, with moderate resistance (8-12 repetitions/60% of your one rep maximum). Upcoming articles will review the most common running injuries and how to prevent them through proper exercise.

4) **Improve Your Balance:** In general, with age comes a decrease in strength, balance and coordination. Balance training exercises, whether they are simple or more strenuous, can help you stay agile, prevent injury, and strengthen less used (but just as important) running muscles.

3) **Don't ignore rest days:** Muscles build and repair during rest days. Running every day will not significantly improve strength but it will increase risk of injury. After a hard run, take a day off.

2) **Listen to your body:** Pay attention to aches and pains. Stop your run if a pain continues, and especially if it makes you change your gait. If you feel a hot spot developing on your foot, stop and take care of it before it turns into a painful blister. Watch for skin chaffing in areas of constant movement.

1) **Avoid the "Terrible Toos":** The number one reason for running injuries is overuse/over-training. Avoid too much intensity, too many miles, too soon. Add miles and intensity (speed, hills, etc.) slowly. Be more conservative than you think when deciding how often, how long, and how much to run. Most running experts say to increase your weekly mileage by no more than 10% each week. By adding miles slowly, you will save yourself pain and frustration, and still make it to the starting line.

Stay healthy and run for life,

Dr Connelly

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