

Preventing Running Injuries

If you run enough, at some point you will deal with injury. Hopefully you will catch and deal with it early.



Better yet, now you can be informed on how to effectively prevent running injuries before they happen. The ever quotable Benjamin Franklin said, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Before you learn about prevention you need to know about the most common cause of running injuries . . . **overtraining**. Overtraining is where your exercise level is too much for your body to deal with.

Signs and Symptoms of Overtraining

- ❖ Decreased appetite
- ❖ Heavy legs
- ❖ Chronically sore muscles that may be sore to the touch
- ❖ Increased pulse rate
- ❖ Increased susceptibility to illness
- ❖ Sleep problems
- ❖ Decreased sex drive
- ❖ Fear of training and trouble pushing yourself

If you notice any of these symptoms it may be time to evaluate your current level of training and take an extra rest day while decreasing your exercise intensity.

Each person has a running "threshold" that when crossed increases their chances of injury. Know your threshold and don't push above it. If you are a new runner remember that you are at greater risk. Make sure you've built a solid running base and that you aren't increasing your mileage too quickly. Slow and steady wins the race. Remember, overtraining significantly increases your risk of injury.

Other common causes of injury include:

- ❖ Sudden changes in routine
- ❖ Lack of rest between high intensity workouts
- ❖ Sudden increase in running distance
- ❖ Workouts that are too hard
- ❖ Changes in running surface
- ❖ Worn out shoes



Proven Strategies for Preventing Injury

The following list of rules was gleaned from www.runnersworld.com and www.active.com, two great places to research running issues.

- ✓ Know your limits. Don't get overconfident. Avoid doing too much, too soon; increase mileage gradually and don't add more than 10% to your mileage per week.
- ✓ Listen to your body- don't run through pain. If you experience atypical pain take 3 days off or do light cross-training, on day 4 run easy and ease back into routine.
- ✓ Check your running form. Poor form can decrease efficiency and increase injury, shorten your stride by 10% and try to land more softly.
- ✓ Use strength training to balance body- focus on hip strengthening to increase leg stability and overall core training. Do squats, lunges, calf raises, and abdominal work.
- ✓ Use the RICE Formula: Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation. This will help relieve pain, decrease swelling, and protect damaged tissues.

- ✓ Evaluate running surface. Are you running on a different surface? Are you doing more hills? Run on a level surface or use the treadmill or track. A cambered road (slanted) can lead to leg deficiencies.
- ✓ Don't race or do speed work too often. Frequent racing can increase injury. Make sure you recover between hard efforts.
- ✓ Stretch after your run when muscles are warm focusing on hamstrings, hips, calves, and quadriceps. Consider cross-training with yoga which will increase range of motion, agility, flexibility, lung capacity, endurance, and strength.
- ✓ Use focused cross-training to help provide active rest and recovery. This will improve muscle balance and decrease chance of injury. Pick your cross-training actively wisely.
- ✓ Treat your feet right. Make sure your shoes fit your feet well and have proper cushioning. Ask yourself, "Are my shoes worn out?" "Do I pronate and need stable trainers?" "Do I have a rigid foot and need more cushioning?" Have your feet and gait evaluated at a specialty running store.
- ✓ Take one day a week for total rest, this helps relax your body so it can focus on repair.
- ✓ Warm up before running. Take 5-10 minutes of walking and light running to warm muscles up, cold muscles are more likely to tear.
- ✓ Keep a training log/journal of your mileage, surface, how you feel, etc. This will help you pinpoint any problems before they turn into full blown injury.
- ✓ Nutrition- you are what you eat, make sure you have the proper balance of lean protein, complex carbs, fresh fruits and vegetables, and hydration.

The Wrap Up

Always stop at the first sign of injury. It is better to miss a couple of runs than push through and have bigger problems down the road. If you are currently injured, think over the previous list to see what may have caused it. Making a couple of changes may get you back on the road to recovery and help prevent future injuries.

This advice is not meant to replace the instruction of your doctor or health care provider. Always consult with a professional medical expert when injuries occur.

Thanks for reading this report! I wish you ultimate success in your marathon training and life.



Connect with Angie on



Angie Spencer ran over 800 miles in 2009. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing in 2000 and has been a Registered Nurse for 10 years. In addition to running, Angie enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, yoga, being in the mountains, and eating dark chocolate.

Check out the Marathon Training Academy [Podcast](#) found in the iTunes Store!