****8032 – Beginner Running**

**Starting for the First Time?**

1. **Get fitted:** Spend the time and money to select the best shoe for your foot type. Don’t skimp on your shoes! Be prepared to pay $80 to $100 for a good pair of running shoes.
2. **Make a plan**: One of the best ways to begin is with a **run/walk method**. Begin with a 1 min run/ 5 min walk interval. Repeat this interval 5 times. Over the next few weeks, gradually increase the running and decrease the walking portions to eventually run for 30 minutes.
3. **Easy does it**: Understand that it takes your body about four to six weeks to get used to the new demands. For beginners, start slowly by adding just 1 or 2 km per week. A common cause of injury is starting too much too soon.
4. **Listen to your body.** Don’t ignore pain! If the pain is different than normal muscle soreness, remember that *pain has a purpose*. It’s a warning sign from your body that something is wrong. Change your running pattern or seek professional help if it’s severe.
5. **Accountability:** Log your training at <http://www.activetrainer.com/free-training-log> or join a running group such as The Running Room <http://www.runningroom.com/hm/inside.php?id=3012>

**Form over Function: Proper Biomechanics**

1. **Stay upright**: The most efficient way to run is to have your head, neck and shoulder erect. When you lean forward, you are always fighting gravity. Remember to keep hips forward, and chest up for proper alignment.
2. **Foot Plant**: There is a difference between what should happen and what you may be able to control. Once properly fitted for shoes, do not try to change your foot plant as you train. As you gain strength, you may well notice that many irregularities resolve themselves.
3. **Arms**: Arms should be relaxed at about a 90-degree angle. Swing should be like a pendulum from the shoulders, elbows down; upper body does not twist side to side.
4. **Stride rate, not stride length**: Studies have shown that when runners get faster, the stride length actually decreases, but the stride rate increases. When you “overstride,” the muscles work harder than they need to and tense up before your run is done.

**What to Eat?**

**Get Fueled:** A good rule of thumb is to eat ~200 to 400 calories of mostly complex carbs and a little protein about 1.5 hours prior to your run. Eating a 4:1 ratio of carbs to protein within 30 to 45 minutes after a run is ideal to replenish your muscles.

**Get Hydrated:** Be sure to drink about 20 oz. of water about 2 hours prior to running. During your run, drinking water is fine. If you’re running longer than 40 minutes, switch to Gatorade for added electrolytes