BON SECOURS
ST. FRANCIS HEALTH SYSTEM

Injury Prevention for Runners

For a safer, more enjoyable experience while running, remember these tips:

About half of all runners are injured annually, with most of those injuries occurring from the waist down. Training too hard, aggravating a previous injury and wearing the wrong shoes are some of the most common reasons running injuries occur. Here are some tips to help keep you going for the long run:

- Watch your running mileage. Increase your distance incrementally – you should run no more than 10 percent farther than your longest run at one time.
- Warm up and cool down with every run.
- When training to increase speed, run hills to improve muscle endurance and power first. When your power has increased, gradually add four to eight-block accelerations into your normal running before beginning aggressive speed sessions.
- Avoid stretching prior to running or during warm up. Stretching lengthens and relaxes muscles, and can decrease their response time and overall strength at the end ranges of movement.
- Gently stretch immediately following a run to help relax muscles and return them to resting length. Avoid aggressive stretching immediately following a run – stretching an already tired muscle can tear muscle fibers.
- Pay attention to stride. Sudden, harsh increases in stride, especially at the end of races or long runs, require extra demand of already tired muscles. Focus on quicker turnover of feet and lower extremities instead.

St. Francis Sports Medicine

864-675-HURT
24/7 Sports Injury Hotline
Sports Medicine Physician Network

864-675-4654
St. Francis Sports Medicine

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