

ARTICLES

WHAT TO DO WHEN STARTING A NEW PROGRAM

When starting a running program there is always an adjustment period.

Sometimes we make the mistake of too much, too soon, too fast. Before starting a new running program I would recommend starting off with a new pair of running shoes. When shopping for a new pair of running shoes be sure to go to a running specific store, there are a few in the Valley. Take your usual running socks and orthotics to get the real feel. It is best to purchase shoes later in the day as our feet tend to swell as the day progresses.

When starting a running program it is best to start with a run - walk technique so your body can adjust to the impact that running imparts. Start with a reasonable goal. Some people like to run by time and others like to log their mileage. Either way keep it reasonable. An everyother day basis is best to allow the body to recover and rebuild. Never increase by more than 10% each week. Also consider the terrain. For example tracks are softer than trails/canals are softer than asphalt is softer than concrete. Mix up the terrain.

The next thing is to make sure you take time to stretch out post run. Stretching should be considered part of your daily workout regime. It is important to stretch out all the major muscle groups that are used during running. Here are just a few stretches that I recommend:

- **Quadricep stretch** - In standing lift your foot up behind you (heel to butt) and grasp it w/ your hand. Keep the knee pointing to the ground and tuck your tail bone under.
- **Hamstring stretch** - Lie on your back and lift your leg up and reach behind the thigh, and grab on. Take the heel up towards the sky and keep your opposite leg flat down and be sure not to arch your back.
- **Hip Flexor stretch** - get into a 1/2 kneel position (one knee down on the ground and the other up w/ the foot on the ground). Tuck your tailbone/pelvis under and lean forward into the leg that has the knee on the ground. Lean until you feel a stretch and hold.
- **Calf stretch** - stand on a curb or step and drop one heel towards the ground. Do a couple with the knee straight and a couple with the knee bent.

Hold each stretch for 30 seconds and do 2 repetitions on each leg. Time permitting do some upper body stretches etc...

Lastly, a little ice post run can help decrease that achy feeling. Ice for 20-30 minutes at a time. If needed take a little Ibuprofen to take the edge off.

If after trying all of the aforementioned your friend is still experiencing knee pain have her/him seek medical attention. Don't let injuries linger, if there's no improvement in 2 weeks it's time to get it checked out.

Happy Trails!