

## **A NEW Way of Running to Lower the Risk of Injury, Increase your Speed, AND Enjoy Running More**

### **Typical Running**

- Same route, same surface, same terrain, same pace/effort, same distance/duration
- Little to no warmup, keep running with very little time to stop, little to no cool down
- Little to no attention/time spent on anything (cross training, strength training, stretching, etc.) but running

IF you are truly satisfied with this routine when it comes to enjoying it, dealing with rare injuries, and are happy with your speed, both in training and in races, keep at it.

However, if you answered 'no' to any of the above, here are some options to consider from someone who's run for 30 years and listened to many health professionals the past 15 years. In the past year, I have enjoyed running more than at any other time and have finally overcome 10+ years of hammy and other issues while improving my speed, especially when you age grade it.

### **NEW Running**

**Make time for at least a 3-5 minute pre warm up routine** – Foam Roll, 3 small band exercises to work the glutes and hips for 15-30 seconds each, 15-30 seconds each of wide stance squats, side lunges, and back lunge w/twist.

Extra credit for doing 30-60 seconds each of a forward lunge with a twist and marching high knees followed by 2 light stretches – 1 for the glutes and hips each - at a 'station' like a playground/picnic table/park bench/guard rail/fence, etc.

**Warm up slower the first 5-10 minutes** - Begin your run as slowly and conservatively as you can for the with walking being an option.

**Change up surfaces** – Mix it up with concrete, asphalt, grass, track, dirt – by incorporating parks, baseball/soccer/football fields, and tracks into each run. The softer surfaces strengthen you from the bottom up while providing your stability muscles with a greater workout. Start modestly with a few minutes off pavement and slowly build from there using the 10% increase rule from week to week.

**Change up terrain** – Unless you are training for a pancake flat race (even then, I wouldn't run too much on flats), vary the terrain to change things up biomechanically. Have flat, rolling, and hilly sections. Be creative with hill repeats if you cannot get enough of the hilly parts.

Extra credit to add more hills in the form of hill sprints or hill repeats (fast or moderate) once or twice a week – These are actually low pounding as long as you take it extra easy on the downhill and wonderful strength & speed builders. There are endless variations from short 10 seconds burst up grass steep uphill with full recovery to ladder fartleks where you increase the time spent going uphill and full recovery back down to simply adding a hill you see off to the side of your route (just go at 'long run' effort up and slowly jog back down to rejoin your route). It will really 'toughen' you up mentally when dealing with all future hills.

**Change up speed** – If you start super slow, you're guaranteed to pick up the pace to some degree. Anytime you feel really good, even on a recovery run day, it's okay to pick it up for a small portion of the workout. Limit the amount of monopace (outside of goal pace miles) you end up doing.

Extra credit to add more pure speed in the form of fartleks, striders, and Tabata's. Fartleks can be traditional 1/1's where you run 1 minute fast (5K effort), 1 minute slow or where you run from marker to marker (like a block or light posts) with an equal amount of rest. Striders are 20 seconds fast (sub 5K effort) with a 40 second recovery. Tabata's are named after Ishumi Tabata who found that doing 8 reps of 20 seconds fast (like the kick at the end of a 5K) with a 10 second rest provided the same aerobic benefits as a 1 hour run. You can incorporate 5-15 minutes of fartleks, 3-6 striders, or 2-4 minutes of Tabata's one to three times a week.

**Stop and Stretch or Strengthen as needed** – If you're dealing with a tight spot, stop in the run every 10-15 minutes to address it – start with the hip & glute stretch but don't hesitate to do some hip and glute strengthening exercise as well. Consider self active release in which you put pressure on the tight spot while lengthening the muscle. This is the best time to do so since you are the most motivated and warmed up to loosen things up. If you're 'on the clock', just keep your watch running so you can get back in the time you have allotted to run. It's just that now you are actually dealing with your issue instead of making things worse – a great trade off compared to 'just running'.

**Finish slower in the final 5 minutes** to jump start the process of recovering from the workout.

**Make time for a 3-5 minute loosening up routine** – Since running tightens up the muscles, stretch them back out with a foam roller and moderate stretching. Be sure to include the glute and hip stretch. If you won't do it when you get back to your house, find a nearby spot to take care of this (and still foam roll right when you get back).

**Strength Train or Cross Train to work on areas that running neglects.** Anything that targets the glutes, hips, and core is key. Get out of your normal plane of running and incorporate side to side things.

ALWAYS Listen to your Body and adjust as needed for any run, workout, stretch, or exercise. The art of training (what works for you) MUST be balanced with the science of training (what works for the average person). This may mean to do less, stay the course, or do more depending on how you feel. If 'staying healthy' is your number 1 goal, never do more even if you feel good – keep a healthy margin for error. Just know that to 'just run', you need to give back to your body in a variety of ways!