

Avoiding exercise pitfalls

If this is your first attempt at running or walking a 10K good for you for getting up and getting active. If you've been running or walking for a while then good for you too for keeping at it. Obviously as either a novice or a seasoned exerciser you will want to be able to progress through your training without incident until the 23rd of June. Reading the following tips should help you to prevent injury and show you how to deal with it when it happens.

- 1) Are you fit for it? If you have any niggling aches or injuries consult your local Chartered Physiotherapist for a comprehensive assessment and diagnosis before you start. Don't assume you will be able to run these things off. You may also need to consult your GP before commencing exercise, especially if you are very unfit or have certain conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes etc.
- 2) Get well kitted out. The appropriate footwear is really important. Not everyone takes the same size shoe so the one shoe style won't fit everyone. Check with your local Chartered Physiotherapist or podiatrist to see which is the best runner choice for you.
- 3) Getting started: Ease your way into exercise. If possible try to train with a group of people who are at your level of fitness. Resist the temptation to do too much too quickly.
- 4) Pace yourself: Make sure you give yourself adequate rest days between sessions to recover, especially if you have increased speed or distance.
- 5) Progress slowly : Even if you used to run but haven't for a while you need to take your time to get back. It only takes 12 weeks to completely lose all your hard won fitness. So no matter how fit you once were you have to ease back slowly into running. Schedule days for increase in distance OR speed, not both together, and stick to your schedule.
- 6) Listen to your body. ' No pain no gain' is a dangerous maxim. You need to know the difference between normal exercise pain (delayed onset muscle soreness or DOMS) and abnormal injury pain. If in doubt contact your local Chartered Physiotherapist or your GP for advice.

Join me and my fellow Clare Chartered Physiotherapists in the following weeks when we will be discussing such topics as :

- Women's health and running
- Looking after your sore feet
- Stretching : to do or not to do ?
- Special needs athletes
- The painful knee
- Being a runner and a Physio
- Hip pain and running

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