



## Injuries – don't get caught out

It's alarming, the amount of injuries reported by club members.  
Most of the common injuries are avoidable if a little common sense is applied.

Assuming a normal or average physique, injuries can be caused by:-

- Running too far, too fast or too soon
- Running on uneven surfaces
- Changing direction or accelerating
- Lack of support for foot arches
- Running up and down hills with the wrong technique
- Trying to keep up with others

People with a less than perfect skeletal physique (many of us) may need to have their gait analysed to correct mechanical problems. Uneven leg length, different foot sizes, pronation and even upper body movement can over stress hips, legs and joints.

### Tips

- Beginners - don't run faster or further before you can "run & talk"
- Niggles become injuries - treat niggles or suffer the consequences
- Shin problems - wear a support when running until the muscle is conditioned
- Replace running shoe liners with arch support High-Med-Low to suit
- If your groups pace improves and you're struggling – move down a group.
- Trying to improve to meet a deadline? - as an amateur without a good coach, you are just asking for trouble.
- There is a lot to be said for non impact & strength training in the gym.
- "Long and Slow" - a great technique - add 2 or 3 mins to your regular pace and run a little further
- The body has a natural healing process – the artificial stimulation of endorphins (acupuncture or TENS) or increasing blood flow (heat or massage) can help speed up this process.
- Don't necessarily follow the advice given to professional athletes – their aims are completely different and to compete at the highest level, they often mask problems to enable them to compete. These athletes can often take years to knock off a few seconds off their PBs.
- Stretching also beneficial but careful not to tear muscles or aggravate tissue where it connects to bone.

Things for your kit bag to treat niggles and prevent further injury.

- Tubigrip
- Compression bandage
- Knee or Ankle supports
- Freezable gel - Velcro to hold it in place
- Voltarol gel
- Ibuprofen
- Deep Heat
- 1000 mile socks
- TENS/EMS machine
- Electrolyte replacement drink/tablets

## **Balancing your fitness**

As you become physically fit, it may be that your cardiovascular system can't cope with the increased physical ability. Alternatively, your cardiovascular system may become very much more efficient, encouraging you to run faster when your body is not ready. Don't be fooled by these Cardiovascular & Physical imbalances they can cause injury. Therefore, always run at a pace where both body and breathing are comfortable.

From a running point of view the cardiovascular system delivers oxygenated blood to the muscle tissue - primarily the legs, arms and diaphragm. However, runners should know the purpose of blood.

- The Red blood cells transport oxygen and nutrients to the lungs and muscle tissues.
- The White blood cells: carry cells and antibodies to fight infection
- Forming blood clots to prevent excess blood loss
- Disposing of waste products to the kidneys and liver, which filter and clean the blood
- The regulation of body temperature

## **Viruses – Careful!**

At various times of the year there can be an imbalance between red & white blood cells. Distance and altitude training both increase plasma volume and red cell / haemoglobin levels leaving a runner more susceptible to viral infections due to a lower white cell count.

Running with a viral infection, no matter how mild, will certainly affect performance and possibly cause injury due to compromised red cell count.

## **They never get injured?**

Runners that never suffer major injuries are smarter than you may realise.

They "listen" to their bodies and know automatically when to moderate or intensify their weekly training. Training is not always about pushing harder and often a few less intense sessions will prove beneficial. The running fitness of these runners is not an accident.