

Fall Marathon Training and Injury Prevention

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Depending on which fall marathon you are planning to run, chances are by mid-August, you have begun your training. Whether your plan calls for 3, 4, 5, or 6 days of training, these late summer runs can be a grind, especially when juggling, work, kids and the hot, humid, summer weather. If you are running your first marathon or your twenty first, there are a few things to keep in mind as you continue your training so you are not limping to the start in October or November.

Strength Training

Running is a repetitive movement and with repetitive movements, muscle weaknesses are accentuated. A weak hamstring will turn into a muscle pull during speed work while a weak core complex will over stress your quads and lead to patella tendonitis. Many runners do not like strength training because they feel it eats into their precious time, especially during marathon training. After all, how many more hours can you dedicate to trying to run the fastest 26.2 possible? Strength training is possibly the most important thing you can do to stay on the road. Multi joint movements targeting multiple muscles groups at the same time is the most time effective ways of getting it done. But as good as strength training is, listen to your body while performing the exercises. If something hurts, chances are you are doing it wrong. These few exercises are a start and this easy workout can take less than 20 minutes to complete.



Fig. 1 PRONE PLANK



Fig 2. MODIFIED PRONE PLANK



Hold 10-30 seconds / Repeat 5-10 times

Perform either the regular prone plank or the modified but not both



Fig. 3. SIDE PLANK



Fig 4. MODIFIED SIDE PLANK



Hold 10-30 seconds / Repeat 5-10 times

Try to bear weight through your entire forearm and not just the elbow



2 sets of 10-15

⚠ Lunge can be a great exercise but be sure to keep front knee back over your ankle and pull yourself up into a standing position rather than pushing up from the back leg

Fig 5. REVERSE LUNGE



Hold each for 5 seconds / Repeat 10-15 times on each leg

⚠ This is a glute and hamstring exercise however the glute is dominant during the lifting phase. If you feel your hamstring cramping, focus on using your glutes to initiate the lift. Keep shoulder, hip and opposite knee in line

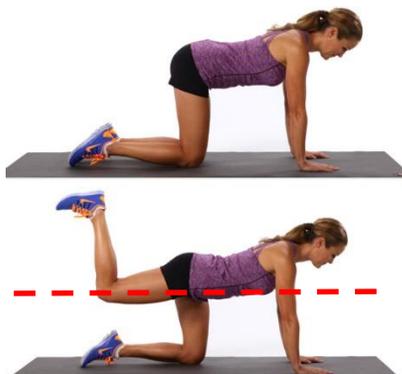
Fig 6. "BALLET BRIDGE"



Hold each for 5 seconds / Repeat 10-15 times on each leg

⚠ Be sure to turn the top foot up so it's pointed at the sky. This activates the muscle better for a more focused exercise.

Fig 7. LATERAL LEG RAISE w/
FOOT TURNED OUT



Hold each for 5 seconds / Repeat 10-15 times on each leg

⚠ Be sure to keep your back flat and not to over extend your leg up. Your thigh should finish parallel to the ground, not hyperextended

Fig 8. DONKEY KICKS

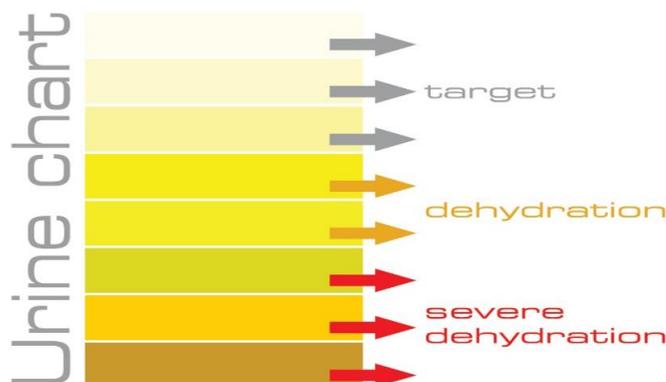
Hydration Basics

Hydration is the dreaded “H” word. Many runners do not hydrate properly because it is an inconvenient burden. Dehydration, even at the lowest levels is enough to side track your training, effect your muscle function and ultimately create one more roadblock to getting you to that start line in the best shape possible. Everyone knows the common side effects of dehydration including headaches, nausea, fatigue and cramping, but not hydrating properly plays a huge role in your muscle function both during runs and after in important rest periods.



Pre Run Hydration

If you are gearing up for a long run on the weekends or race day, you have to pay close attention to hydrating throughout the days leading up to that run, not just during the run. However as most runners tend to fall into a daily routine, those that over hydrate to prevent cramps and headaches are the ones who have the most trouble during race day. Hydration is a balancing act and not just a battle to get as much water as you can in you. Your body is 65% of that roughly 20% is found in your blood. Your body does a great job regulating your fluid balance. It shifts fluid to areas that need it more and it reminds you to get rid of the excess through urine. During periods of greater activity, your body decreases the amount of urine output but instead shifts that excess water into the extracellular space. That is why athletes who hydrate too much during exercise tend to also get headaches, because the cells in the brain swell with excess fluid. Listen to your body pre-race and experiment with hydration routines. Drink daily and slightly more in the days leading up to a race but drink to thirst, especially to avoid hyponatremia, I condition gaining more national attention especially in endurance athletes. During hyponatremia, sodium levels get diluted and the body pulls water from the surrounding cells causing them to swell and creating an unsafe metabolic environment. Use this guide as a starting point with urine color as that can be the best indicator of hydration levels.



In Race Hydration

A good general guideline is to drink 3-6 ounces of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes. This averages out to grabbing a cup every other mile. Sometimes the first water stop in a race is very crowded, so consider skipping it and starting at the second water stop, but always plan ahead and have a drinking strategy. While running a marathon you are losing a lot of electrolytes and calories, a hydration drink is a good choice. However, because Gatorade may be hard on your stomach due to the large amount of sugar, practice prior to running the race and sometimes even cutting the Gatorade with some water at the same time or take smaller sips.



Know Your Sweat Rate

Everyone's fluid intake needs are different and everyone will need to consider many factors when determining the optimal hydration strategy on race day. The smartest runners have an idea about what their sweat rate is. During your training, weigh yourself naked before and after a long 60 to 90 minute run. Convert the amount of weight loss to hydration loss by the simple equation of 1 pound of body weight lost is equivalent to 16 ounces of fluid lost. Then factor in the amount of fluid intake during that long run and you will have a better idea of net fluid loss during your long runs. It will take some practice but is more accurate than estimating come race day. Your urine color is your best gauge of hydrations levels. If you are hydrating too much, your urine will be clear but if you are not drinking enough it could look something like iced tea.



About Chris Lauretani, PT, MS, CSCS, CKTP

Chris Lauretani, PT, MS, CSCS, CKTP is the founder and President of Symmetry Physical Therapy in Pelham, New York. As a Licensed Physical Therapist, Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist and Certified Kinesio Taping Practitioner, Chris works extensively with endurance athletes of all levels while serving as a sports medicine consultant to NewRo Runners as well as numerous professional athletes, organizations and other running clubs. For injury inquiries, you can contact him at 914-738-1748 or clauretani@symmetrypt.com or visit <http://www.symmetrypt.com/>