

## Prevention of Running Injuries

Although running is undoubtedly one of the best ways to keep fit, as a 'high impact' activity, ironically it can lead to all manner of injuries. In fact, up to 70% of runners develop an injury to some degree every year. The good news is that most running injuries are preventable. Follow these steps to keep yourself healthy and comfortable:

- **Avoid the "terrible too's".** Many running injuries are a result of overtraining: too much intensity, too many kilometres, too soon. It's important to go easy when adding mileage or intensity to your training. You shouldn't increase your weekly mileage by more than 10% each week.

Do not run more than 70-80 km per week. There is little evidence that running more than 70 km per week improves your performance, but a great deal of evidence shows that running more than 70 km per week increases your risk for an overuse injury.



- **Stay loose.** Be diligent about stretching -- Regular stretching cannot be emphasized enough as an injury preventive routine.

Runners frequently develop tightness in the gluteal, hamstrings and calf muscles. The quadriceps and front shin muscles can become relatively weak and tight due to muscular imbalance. So it is these muscle groups that should be attended to regularly with gentle stretching.

Biomechanical analysis has also shown us that weak core control can lead to overuse and tightness of a runner's lower limb muscles. Consult your physiotherapist for a suitable core stability program.



- **Get the right running shoes.** Be sure that your shoes aren't worn out and that you have the right model for your foot type and running style. The wrong shoe can actually aggravate existing problems, causing pain in your feet, legs, knees or hips. Wearing shoes that have lost their cushioning may also lead to injury. Go to a specialty running shop where you can be properly fitted for running shoes, and replace your running shoes every 800-1000 km.

Unfortunately even with the best preventive routines, running injuries can and do still occur. If the pain from a running injury that you are managing yourself does not improve after a few days, it is best to contact one of our Jubilee Sports Physiotherapy clinics to get an accurate diagnosis of the injury and suggest the most appropriate treatment plan.