

RACE TIPS

- **Get Your Z's Two Nights Before.** Pre-race jitters tend to strike the night before the race, interrupting your sleep. When it comes to running for beginners or even experienced racers, trust that this is normal and will not influence your race. Prepare yourself instead by getting quality sleep two nights before the race and taking that day completely off from any activity.
- **Keep It Light.** During race week, your running mileage should decrease. At this point, your training is really about "storing up" rest so your legs are ready on race day. During the week, include two to three short runs with a few, small pick ups — short, snappy segments that get your legs moving faster and prepare you for the faster tempo of the race — to keep your legs fresh. Two days out from the race, take a day off for total rest. The day before the race, do a short (20-minute) run with up to five pick ups under 45 seconds to sharpen your legs.
- **Fill the Tank.** On race morning, be sure to eat the breakfast you've practiced in training. Aim to eat about two hours prior to the race. Keep it simple — a bowl of oatmeal with dried fruit, a sports bar, bagel with peanut butter. Eat something high energy and easily digestible. Be sure to include hydration — water, sports drink if it's warm outside to give you the electrolytes you need, and coffee if that's part of your normal routine.
- **Get There Early.** There's a lot to be done on race morning including parking, packet pick-up, waiting in line for the restroom, warming up. Arrive at the race site 60 minutes prior to the start — knowing where you can park, what time packet pick-up closes (if you couldn't do it the day before), and where to go for the starting line.
- **Warm It Up.** About 25 minutes prior to the race, get warmed up. Start with a 10 minute easy jog, then slowly build your pace for five minutes. Then, include up to five short pick-ups under 30 seconds at race pace. Gently stretch any tight muscles after your warm up.
- **Get in line.** The starting line can be crowded and nerve-wracking with so many people and different paces. Starting in the middle to back of the pack is safe for most beginners. You will start with those around your pace and you will have many more ahead of you to chase down.
- **Pace Yourself.** Most racers give their best effort in the first mile leaving two more to go! Aim to negative split your effort on race day — that simply means finishing the second half of the race faster than you ran the first half. Start conservatively and build your effort throughout the run. When you start out too fast, your body works too hard too soon and fizzles after the first mile, making your overall time slower, not faster. In the last quarter mile, kick it in to the finish line to finish strong.
- **Keep It Positive.** When things get tough, it's common for the little voice in your head to start telling you all the reasons why you will fail or why you should slow down. Often, having a positive mantra for the race — such as "I can do it" or "fast feet to the finish line" — will distract you from any pain and keep you focused. Practice these affirmations during your harder training sessions so they become automatic on race day.
- **Breathe.** On race day, let go of any comparisons to other runners and release any worries or doubts. You've done the training and if you have the desire to get to the finish line, you will arrive. At the starting line, take a few deep breaths and assure yourself that you have what it takes to cover 3.1 miles. Revisit your best training sessions to find the confidence you need.
- **Run Or Walk within yourself** - If you have not been training or exercising, play it safe and do not overdo it on race day
- **Be powered to exercise!** Don't wait until race day to hydrate. Be sure to drink 8 oz of water at least 20 minutes before the start of race and re-fuel at the water stations along the route
- **Slow down carefully.** Don't come to a sudden stop in the middle of the race because that may cause an accident. Pull over and slow down gradually and be considerate of the other participants.
- **Keep It Clean.** Help us keep our environment clean by placing all plastic bags/bottles in the bins provided.

