



Post-race Recovery Tips

Congratulations on running the Eversource Hartford Marathon, Half Marathon, Team 26.2 Relay and Charity 5K on Saturday!

Lower Back Pain

Q) My lower back, right side only, keeps stiffening up when I run. Any tips?

Back pain that localizes to one side – in your case the right – can indicate muscular spasm and irritation, possible problems with the sacroiliac joint (SI joint), problems with the hip, or a problem with the low back itself. It could also indicate some muscular irritation from core weakness. Heat and foam rolling are both great ideas. I would recommend a core strengthening and low back stabilization program. Make sure you



Outer Knee Pain/IT-Band Tendonitis

Q) I was having a great run until mile 11 when the outside of my knee starting hurting. By the end of the race I could barely run. It's swollen. Can you tell me what happened and what should I do?

Pain on the outside of the knee is due to IT-band tendonitis. I would suggest rest and applying ice to the area. Stretching is often helpful. We have some great info on IT band tendonitis and stretches. If your symptoms persist you might want to see a sports medicine physician to make sure it is not more serious.

Leg/Calf Cramps

Q) I ran the full and experienced cramping in both calves at mile 21 and could not finish the race. I've never had this before, how can I prevent it in the future?

If you were experiencing the cramping at mile 21, you may be dehydrated. Hopefully you have been drinking through the race, however you may be somewhat depleted in micronutrients such as sodium, etc. Water should be replenished after the race, but supplement with a sports drinks along with stretching and rolling will be helpful.

More hydration tips here.

Q) I paced the marathon and there were few runners in my group that were getting cramps in their legs. I also experienced it in my calves. I use salt pills during the race to help prevent this and also made sure I stopped and drank water at each water stops. My calves are pretty tight and I've been rolling them to loosen them up. Any advice you can provide would be great.

Cramping can also be related to changes in your running form as the race progresses. Make sure your training includes good core strengthening and focusing on hip extension. Calf cramps in particular can be related to compensation for lack of hip strength – as your hips get tired your body recruits the calf muscles to maintain your pace.

Ankle/Heel Pain

Q) Stiff ankles and the great debate: how often should running shoes be replaced?

Depending on whether you are a soft or hard pounder and you run on average 3 miles per day, you should change your shoes every 5-6 months or so. Always check the shoes soles for excessive wear. Running with worn shoes may be the cause of this stiffness you're experiencing and may lead to other issues.

Foot Pain

Q) I have pain in my left foot somewhat on top but lateral side almost a thumbs distance down from my left ankle. Putting pressure on the area is tender but makes it feel a bit better. Any thoughts what it could be?

There are a few possibilities as to what this might be. It may be tendon irritation from the long run. There are joints in that area that may be inflamed. Thankfully most of these problems should improve over the next several days with supportive care such as rest, wearing good supportive shoes, and icing (10-15 minutes on 3-4 times per day with the skin protected). If your symptoms don't improve this could indicate a more significant injury and a medical evaluation may be necessary to rule out a stress injury.

Q) I experienced blisters on the balls of both feet. One blister popped at mile 13. I finished but had trouble walking after. I have a full coming up in a month. Any ideas on how to treat and prevent this in the future?

I have always left the torn skin in place for protection if possible, you can purchase some blister pads from your local pharmacy that can be applied to help reduce pain of walking. Going forward for your next race, I would make sure that you good cotton socks to help reduce the friction while running.

Preparing for the next race

Q) I have another half marathon 4 weeks from now...should I start right back into week 9 of a 12 week training plan or take this week off to stretch, crosstrain, rest, etc? And then back into training week 10?

Yes that sounds like a good plan, I would take the week as an active recovery week, with a focus on re-hydration, stretching and alternative exercise such as cross-training, before you start back to training.

Q) How long do you recommend resting before jumping right back into running? I ran the half on Saturday, a little sore/tight today but overall feel great.

Focus on light low-impact activities for the first week post race such as swimming, biking or walking.



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