Trinity Health Of New England | Orthopedics

Saint Francis Hospital Trinity Health

HMF EVENTS LEAGUE OF INJURED RUNNERS

Post-race Recovery Tips

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

After Crossing the Finish Line:

1. Keep Walking: Don't stop abruptly. Walk for 10-15 minutes to promote circulation and muscle recovery
2. Rehydrate and Refuel: Head to the food tent in the expo area - drink fluids with electrolytes and consume a carbohydrate-rich snack or meal within 30 minutes to an hour after finishing. A combination of carbohydrates and protein helps with glycogen replenishment and muscle repair.
3. If it was rainy or extra sweaty, change out of wet clothes into clean, dry layers to avoid getting chilled.
4. Stretch on your own or at a stretching station in the Bushnell Park expo area; and/or foam roll at the League Of Injured Runners - Trinity Health of New England Orthopedics Tent
5. Then, you can lie down and elevate your legs against a tree to help reduce inflammation and soreness.

The first few days post-race:

1. Prioritize Sleep: Get as much rest and sleep as possible, as this is when your body performs its most crucial repair work.
2. Continue Hydration and Nutrition: Sip fluids steadily and continue to eat a balanced diet rich in carbs and protein to aid muscle repair.
3. Active Recovery: Engage in very light, low-impact activities like walking, swimming, or easy spinning on a stationary bike to promote blood flow and clear metabolic waste.
4. Listen to Your Body: Pay attention to any lingering pain or stiffness. Stretch and foam roll as needed.
5. Limit Alcohol and avoid Anti-Inflammatory Painkillers: Alcohol and anti-inflammatory painkillers can hinder recovery, so it's best to avoid them for a few days.

In the First Week:

1. Gentle Movement: Continue with low-impact activities like walking, gentle yoga, Pilates, or light cycling.
2. Continue stretching and foam rolling muscle groups that feel tight and sore.
3. Consider Massage: A sports massage two to three days post-race can help release muscle tension.
4. Gradual Return to Running: After a full week of rest or very light activity, you can try a short (20-30 minute), easy "test" run/jog to see how your body feels.

In the Following Weeks:

1. Slowly Increase Volume: Over the next few weeks, gradually increase the duration of your runs, but avoid intense workouts or speed work until your body feels completely recovered.
2. Strength training: When your muscles have recovered, and feel ready, gradually return to resistance/strength training.
3. Be Patient: Your body needs significant time to fully recover from a marathon or ½ marathon, and a complete return to your normal training volume might take up to a month.