

# This Mother Can Run

July - August 2011

“What I’ve learned is that time doesn’t matter for me. I especially tell older women that. I’m just glad to be out there running. Don’t think about your time. It doesn’t matter what your time is. You’re doing it! You’re running. Once I realized that I knew I was an athlete. I am a runner!”

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# This Mother Can Run

Founders and publishers: Nanette and Mike Simmons

Executive editor: Nanette Simmons

Advertising: [advertising@ThisMotherCanRun.com](mailto:advertising@ThisMotherCanRun.com)

Web Designer: Lori Schroeder ([www.lswebstitedesigns.com](http://www.lswebstitedesigns.com))

Graphic Designer: Olga Filippova ([www.20anhour.com](http://www.20anhour.com))



# TEN STEPS TO A BAD 5K

By Heather Gannoe

**Step 1:** Eat really, really well for a week straight. Nothing processed enters your body. 36 hours before the race, accidentally consume massive quantities of wine. By accidentally, I mean, “one glass won’t hurt” turns to two, then three, and oh wait, that glass was really big so 3 probably equaled 4 or 5. See? Accident.

**Step 2:** For the 24-12 hours pre race: nurse a gnarly hangover. Do not rehydrate properly, because your stomach can’t handle the thought of...well...anything. Same goes with food. Don’t bother fueling. Lay on the couch all day with your sick kids.

**Step 3:** Lying on the couch all day will give you a nice boost of energy around, oh, 9:00 PM, so be sure to stay up late. TOO late.

**Step 4:** Wake up super early. Early enough that you have about 3 hours to sit around and mull over your nervous energy.

“It’s too hot out to warm up anyway.”

**Step 5:** Eat nothing more than a banana for breakfast. That nervous energy won’t allow for much more than that anyway. And no, still no hydrating!

**Step 6:** Be sure to pick a race that has NO shade on the course. Make sure the sun is out without any cloud cover, and be absolutely certain that the temperature reaches at least 80 degrees before the start.

**Step 7:** Consider 3/10ths of a mile a “good enough” warm up. It’s too hot out to warm up anyway.

**Step 8:** When the gun goes off, run like a bat out of hell. Pacing shmacing! If you look down and see anything slower than a 5:30 min/mile pace on your Garmin, you are going too slow. Hold this pace for, oh, a quarter mile, until your body starts screaming, “Yeah, right,” and you drop pace significantly.

**Step 9:** When you hit the water stop and grab a big cup to pour over yourself, remember, you have a sweat wicking visor on. Therefore, throw the entire contents of the cup at the top of your forehead, ensuring no water ACTUALLY touches your skin nor does any good in cooling you off.

**Step 10:** Congratulations, at this point you should be walking the course, letting people pass you left and right, reveling in the dizziness and chills that are likely the onset of heat exhaustion. Be sure to really note how HEAVY your legs feel, and the fact that your Garmin is constantly beeping at you to “go faster”. Nothing says “bad 5k” like adding a minute to each one of your three miles, and walking within 200 yards of the finish line - of a 5k!

“Be sure to pick a race that has NO shade on the course.”

## TEN STEPS TO A GOOD 5K

**Step 1:** Pick a race that celebrates something important, such as appreciating our Military personnel, past and present, and all that they do for us.

**Step 2:** Meet up with friends, new and old. A run is always better when shared. Even if you don't run the same pace, you are still there together.

**Step 3:** ENJOY the fact that you are running. What is it they always say? A bad day of fishing running is always better than a good day at work? Or something like that. You are doing what you love. So LOVE IT, even if it's really hard today. Push. Persevere. Giggle as you think of your sister, who texted you to "pretend Shaun T. is chasing you". Tell yourself to dig deeper, for Shaun's sake.



**Step 4:** Get really excited when you cross the finish line and a veteran hands you a finisher's medal. Unexpected bling for simply finishing a local 5k? Yes, please!

**Step 5:** Celebrate the fact that even though you had a horrible race, you still placed first in your age group. Accept your award with a big smile on your face.



25:55 may not be "good" to you, but it's certainly far from "slow".



**Step 6:** Cheer for your running partner in crime when she also takes an age group award. You knew she would, she's been rocking this whole season, with a 6 month old baby in tow!

**Step 7:** Scream with excitement when your new friend wins her first age group award.

**Step 8:** Try not to tear up when aforementioned age group winner and new friend (who lives a thousand miles away, and you've never met in person until that morning) reminds you that YOU were the one who first suggested and encouraged her to take up running.

**Step 9:** Beam with pride over having the world's sweetest babies. When you walk in the door, your 2 year old exclaims excitedly, "Oh Mama, you wond TWO medals, gweat job esercising!!!"

**Step 10:** Thank God for your health, your strength, your LEGS, and an amazing sport that has brought so much good to your life!



“When the gun goes off, run like a bat out of hell.”

Heather Gannoe is a proud mom of two boys, ages 4 and 2. She started running 4 years ago, as a way to lose the baby weight, but running quickly came to mean so much more to her than simply a means of weight loss. In the last 4 years, she has finished 6 marathons, 10 half marathons, countless smaller races, and is now diving into the world of triathlon. She is finishing up her bachelors degree in exercise and sports science, and currently works as a fitness coach and group fitness instructor. In her free time she volunteers as a coach for the local running group for both adult and children's running programs. Heather is passionate about spreading the motivation to live a healthy, active lifestyle to everyone she meets. You can follow her adventures at [www.runfastermommy.com](http://www.runfastermommy.com).



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*No Limits. No Constraints. Only Opportunities to be REMARKABLE.*

Girls on the Run inspires 3rd through 8th grade girls to stay true to themselves and live free from societal stereotypes. Our 12-week after-school curriculum innovatively weaves training for a 5k run with lessons that empower girls to celebrate their bodies, honor their voices and embrace their gifts. There are so many ways to get involved! To learn more, find a program near you, or sign up for our Adult Charity Running Program, SoleMates, visit [girlsontherun.org](http://girlsontherun.org).



ADVERTISEMENT

# This Mother Was the Biggest Loser

Helen Phillips, winner of The Biggest Loser reality TV show, just celebrated her second year anniversary away from The Biggest Loser Ranch. Her starting weight on The Ranch was 257 pounds which she contributes to yo-yo dieting, excuses, a sedentary lifestyle, and emotional eating. During her time on the show she learned to count calories, keep positive and ultimately that she is after all an athlete. Although she didn't think it was possible, *This Mother Can Run!*

**Q:** How has it been for you now being away from The Biggest Loser Ranch? What things did you have to learn on your own? Do you still struggle or is it easy to maintain your weight loss?

**A:** I just recently celebrated my 2nd year anniversary from the show. It's amazing because I've taken some time to sit down to process the lessons I've learned at The Ranch. When I got home it was really difficult for me because I had been there for almost 7 months, and I was in this sort of bubble. The food was purchased for us. We had to prepare it, of course, but there was a gym in my back yard and nothing to worry about except myself and getting healthy. So when I first came home, I went a little crazy. I was thinking that I had to reenact The Ranch here at home. That wasn't reality. I was on a reality show, now I was living reality. It really was an adjustment for me in the beginning. The first



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 "Push yourself out  
 of the  
 comfort zone."  
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thing I did was to bring in the garbage cans and clean out all the cupboards, 2 refrigerators and freezers. While I was away, my husband and my son were here living the bachelor life. They had seven pounds of butter in the freezer! Who has seven pounds of butter in their fridge? Really? So that was a reality check for me. I did go a little crazy at first. I wanted to live the healthy lifestyle but I wasn't sure how everyone was going to react at home. Since then I have adapted very well. I did go a little bit extensive working out those first couple of months. Since then I've really found a balance living a healthy lifestyle and eating the way I want to eat. I've changed everything. My whole life is a 360 degree change. I am turning 51 right around the corner, and I look back at my 2 year anniversary and realize that I was a person who never played sports, never was an athlete, was terrified to run, and now I have become an athlete in the middle of my life. I've never felt better and healthier in my life. I was a yo-yo dieter and a junk food addict and an emotional eater...you name it and that was me. Plus I was the girl who would stand in line at the grocery store and buy every



magazine that said, “Lose 10 pounds in three days.” Everything was a diet before. Now I don’t call eating well a diet. I call a diet, the foods I’m eating in my diet. What I realized is that it changed the way I think. This is a lifestyle. This is no longer a diet for me. This is a lifestyle that I am choosing. I’m eating well and having a balanced nutritional diet each day. When we were on The Ranch, every contestant goes through a lot of medical testing. The age I was accepted on The Ranch was 48, and inside I was that of a 60 year old woman. I actually turned that around and when I left The Ranch I was 45 years old inside. It was amazing that I was actually younger than I really was!

**Q:** What is your workout routine like? Do you work out with your daughter, Shannon?

**A:** Because I live in Michigan it’s hard to work out outside so I go to the gym. I was always one of those people who made excuses for working out. I never really was an athlete. So now I go to the gym about 3 times a week, but on nice days now like we have in Michigan, I find myself running and biking and doing so much outdoors. I find fun things to do so I don’t find myself feeling that moment of dread when I walk into the gym. So many people think, I’ve got to spend a half hour on the treadmill, but it’s so important to find something that you love to do! There are so many things out there. There’s yoga, Zumba, spinning, biking, Street Strider, and a lot of other outdoor activities. On a usual routine, what I usually do is get on the rowing machine because what I find is that you really need to warm up before you work out. I get on there and it takes me exactly 27 minutes before I start to break a sweat. What’s great about the rowing machine is that you’re working out your upper and your lower body at the same time. Once I’m warm, I do my stretches. Then I hop on the treadmill or I do a spin class or I do the stepper. Then the next day I will warm up for a half hour or 45 minutes and then I’ll lift weights. And yes, I do work out with my daughter, Shannon as well as my girlfriends. My friends have lost weight too. One of my friends has lost 78 pounds now and the other one has lost 50, the other two are like 20 and 30 pounds lost! It’s way more fun when you have a workout buddy to do the workouts with, but when you don’t, I say go to these group classes because it really does help make it easier, and it







makes it more fun. Now I don't have to work out like we did at The Ranch (4 hours +). I travel a lot now. I do motivational speaking. I'm on the road, and most hotels have a gym. There are days that I work out 3-4 hours if I have the time. On other days it's 1-2 hours – 1 hour running and later in the day an hour biking. Generally I work out 3-4 times a week. That may be an hour here and there, whatever my life allows. I try not to go more than 2 days without working out

because then I feel guilty and like a slacker. I was 257 pounds when I started on The Ranch. I never would have pushed myself if I wasn't on the show. My advice is even if you only have 20 minutes to work out do it. Give yourself that. It's better than nothing. If you can only walk 30 minutes, do that. Maybe the next day you can go 32 minutes. Push yourself out of the comfort zone. That's what will push you to the next level. I never would have thought I would have run a marathon. I wasn't training to run a marathon.

But I did it. The feeling you get when you accomplish something like that is an extraordinary accomplishment. I did it in 5:49 which is great for an old broad!

**Q:** What is the most important lesson you learned through your journey?

**A:** I think the most important lesson is not to be afraid and to push through the fear. I was always afraid that I wouldn't measure up, but now I look for a challenge. I will try everything now. I learned that the fear was holding me back the most. Setting goals was another big thing for me. It's important to write everything

down. Find out what's eating at you. Work through your issues. Take those small issues that are eating at you and you are "eating away". The longer you harbor those things, you will see more weight. I want to live a healthy lifestyle. So working out and eating right is it. There's no magic. It's that simple. It's not easy, but every little step you take adds up. I never thought I'd lose 147 pounds or that I'd win the show.

**Q:** Do you have any races coming up?

**A:** There are a few races coming up. I held my first 5K last year. It's called The Helen Phillips Health Walk/Run. It's at the Detroit Riverfront. It was wonderful! There were so many women that did it as their first 5K. They traveled from all over. We are working on the second one. It will probably be in August.



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"I feel like I changed my life  
in the middle of it."

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**Q:** You're an inspiration to millions. What or who inspires you?

**A:** You know what inspires me is my family, my community, and the people who write to me. When I'm out there speaking, people tell me their stories. The people in the audience tell me their stories and it keeps me going. I want to be there for people. I've learned that you need the support. You need to have someone to tell your secrets to because I was in their shoes. I know how it feels. You feel angry, depressed. I feel like I have a responsibility to those people. I always come across people who have lost 100, 120 pounds...so inspiring. One woman lost 125 pounds at 75 years old! She brought me to tears with her story. It was just wonderful. Age does not matter. I feel like I changed my life in the middle of it.

**Q:** Once you lost the weight, you won and the show was over, did you feel like a fish out of water? Was there a little trepidation, fear, let down? How did you overcome those feelings?

**A:** I didn't have an empty feeling. I have never felt so fulfilled in my life, but what I did have was that feeling of oh my gosh what if I fall back into my old patterns again? That thought scared me. I had to retrain my thinking. I knew that those old patterns were not me anymore. I was not going to let myself fall back into that hole again. I worked really hard to make myself better for me, my family, and my community. It was hard at first, but you just have to make good choices.

My son and I would always go to a certain restaurant for fettuccine. He said to me, "You know you want this." So I took a bite and then spit it into my napkin. I like the way I feel right now. I like not having the sugar running through my veins and crashing at 3:00 in the afternoon. You just make choices and stick by them. That's why it's so important to set those goals. I used to munch throughout the day. Even when you're munching on healthy foods all day you can still gain weight. Now I give myself the 10 second rule. I hold the food in my hand and take 10 seconds to ask myself some questions. Am I hungry? When was the last time I ate? What am I eating this for? Am I bored? Am I upset about something? It's important to ask yourself those questions. I was an emotional eater. I would sit down in front of the TV and before you know it, I would have finished off a whole bag of chips.

It's important to know what you're eating and why. It's important to be accountable to yourself. I still write the things that I eat down in a journal.

**Q:** Before Biggest Loser, I'm sure you had days when you knew you should workout, but that negative inner voice said, "Why bother?" And I'm sure, like everyone else, you still hear that little voice, but tell us how you push past it now?

**A:** Sleep is just as important as exercise. Once on The Ranch, I walked into the gym and Jillian told me to go take a nap because she said I looked too tired. It's very important to listen to your body. If you're too tired, take a rest. Only you know if you are really tired. Differentiate the excuses from reality. I don't want to be the Old Helen, making excuses.





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"I like not having the sugar running through my veins and crashing at 3:00 in the afternoon."

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I used to suffer from depression. It's important to talk things over with – counselor, husband, trainer, friend... When I feel too tired to workout I say to myself, "Get up, dress up, and show up." I could lay in bed an extra couple of hours, but then I would hate myself for doing that. I used to make tons of excuses. I try not to do that any more. I wake up, eat my breakfast and get moving. If you can't do it on your own, that's when support helps.

**Q:** Are there any gadgets or gear that you love right now or you can't live without?

**A:** I still use a calorie counting book. I have about 15 lying all around the house. I have them in my car, my purse, and the house. Then I always know if I can have a certain food and if so, how much. Maybe I'll have that snack but only a teaspoon of it. I also love my iPod and the music when I workout. I love having upbeat music especially when I'm alone on the treadmill. I love my Body Bug, the calorie counting technology that attaches right to your arm! I always tell people to not only use the calorie counting book, but also two journals. One journal is for writing down everything that you put into your mouth that day. The other one is to write down how you're feeling, your goals, your emotions, and what you've gone through that day that bothered you or made you happy. Then you can start to notice patterns with your eating. If you got in a fight with your boss or the girl at work and then you notice that you ate an entire cheesecake, you can see that they always go hand-in-hand. When you have a busy week, you can refer to the week that you ate perfectly and follow that.

**Q:** What did you do with your winnings from the show? Anything fun?

**A:** I bought a new Jeep. It has a full retractable roof. My husband asked where I was going to put my kayak and my bike, and so I went with the Jeep. Now I can carry my bike and everything. I also gave the kids some money, went on a trip, and saved some for a rainy day. I was hoping to some day open a health clinic/spa, a place where people can workout and get the support they need. Maybe some day...

**Q:** What are your future plans? Do you have goals for yourself?

**A:** I really want to climb Machu Picchu. My husband is training right now and as soon as he is ready we will do that. Hopefully once my husband retires we will be able to open the gym/nutritional support center that I've talked about. I'm studying to be certified to be a life coach now. I really want to work to end childhood obesity. We just had a program called "Just Move". I was ambassador of that. It was three days. We ran the 5K. They had yoga, Zumba, ½ marathon, and 5K. I ran with the kids. I like that they got the kids involved.



**Q:** Having been on a reality TV show, how accurate are they? Do the producers “produce” any extra drama based on feelings that they hear contestants talk about?

**A:** One thing I was upset about is that you have to remember this is a show, and there is a lot of editing. When my daughter, Shannon, and I went below the yellow line, I NEVER would have sent her home. I would never in a million years send my daughter home! She chose to go home, and they edited that all out. When we went to the room to discuss, she said she wanted to go home because she has her own business as a massage therapist, and she had no contact with her employees. She was afraid of losing her business.

**Q:** How has your journey with running changed or evolved?

**A:** When I first started Jillian made everyone run all the time. She taught me how to run. I didn't like to run at first, but she made me do it. Every day she made me do it, and every day I got a little better. I became in competition with myself. One day she came over she said, “Look at your treadmill, Mama. You just ran 5 miles without stopping.” I couldn't believe it. It was a 9.5-10 minute mile. I kept going and ended up doing 9 miles that day. This was the end of the day too. I had already worked out for 4 hours earlier in the day. What I've learned is that time doesn't matter for me. I especially tell older women that. I'm just glad to be out there running. Don't think about your time. It doesn't matter what your time is. You're doing it! You're running. Once I realized that I knew I was an athlete. *I am a runner!*



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“Differentiate the  
excuses from reality.”

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Name: Aelen Phillips

Q: Favorite running song and the artist/band

"The Climb" by Miley Cyrus

Q: Favorite time of day to run

morning

Q: How do you prefer to train?

X alone (I like to run alone. Then I can think.)

X with a partner (I like beating up my girlfriends at the gym)

X in a group (for classes like Zumba)

Q: Most scenic place you've ever run

Mackinaw Bridge - the sun was coming up right between the two pillars, Mackinaw Island, and RIA during the marathon

Q: Average miles per run

5-6 miles

Q: Where do you usually run?

X treadmill (During the winter.)

X outside (When the weather is nice.)

Q: What do you do while running?

X listen to music

   watch TV

   talk

X think

   other

Q: Favorite running gadget or gear

Pod, my Asics and my sports bra - Enell

Q: Why did you start running?

X to get in shape (I was forced!!!!)

   to get back to pre-pregnancy weight

   for fun

   for sport

   other

Q: Favorite race distance

   5K

   10K

X 1/2 marathon

   marathon

   other

# How NOT to Start Running

By Kelly Collins

I'm sitting here staring out my window at a gorgeous sunny day. Just the exact kind of day that makes people go, "Ahhhh...I think I'll start running." Yes, yes, there are people who randomly pick up and start running because of the nice weather. In fact, you've probably seen them barely plodding along on the side of the road, their ratty old sweat pants drenched in sweat, wearing a pair of shoes that may or may not be recognizable as having at one time been an actual pair of running shoes, gasping for breath and looking for the shortest route home.

Let's not mince words here. Running can be hard even for the seasoned pro. Taking up running for the first time in a long time can be really, REALLY hard. Stupid hard. The kind of hard that makes you take those barely recognizable running shoes and toss them straight back into the back of your closet with the vow never to wear them again, kind

of hard. But here's the good news: it doesn't have to be. So let me spare you the stupid hard and give you a few pointers to make running less hard and maybe even a little bit fun, because we all know, the results are worth it.

**1) While we're on the topic, do not go running in your barely recognizable running shoes. Or some random pair that sort of look like an athletic shoe.** Running shoes are made for running. Other shoes are made for, well, other things. Does it make a difference? Does riding a wild bull bareback for the first time in a rodeo hurt? I have no idea, but I'm going with yes. If what first pops into your head when you pick up your shoes is, "These are probably ok." The answer is no. They are probably not. Soles wear out before treads and unless you can specifically remember what all exactly you've been doing in that shoe, it's a safer bet to opt for a new pair.

Go to a running specialty shop and have a pro take a look at your feet to help you determine what type (yes, there are types) of running shoe will work best for you. If you prefer to join the ranks of the barefoot runners and run sans shoes, go for it. Go with what the Good Lord gave you or go with science, but do not, by any means, go with something you are not entirely sure about, unless you're just begging for some pain and/or an injury. Then by all means, my friend, I think I've even got some flip flops you can borrow.

**2) Do not start without a plan. You can if you want, but I give you...oh, about a week... max. Inevitably, life (or that really comfy couch) just gets in the way.** Sit down. Decide what you want to do. Come up with a goal and then write down how you're going to get there. Your goal could be any number of things: to run a race, a particular distance, shed a particular number of pounds, but make it specific so that you know when you've reached





it (and can celebrate! Always reward yourself, at least in a little way, when you hit your goals.) and you can determine the path to get there. “I’m going to run a few

days a week,” is good, but it’s pretty general. Whereas, “I’m going to run a 5K in 3 months,” is a much more specific goal that you can lay out a game plan for.

**3.) Do not start running immediately following childbirth.** I know you may want to, and it’s hard to resist, but do. Even if you were one of the lucky ones who gave birth just as quick and easy as my 2 year old creates colorful masterpieces on my living room walls (yep, she did), with barely a stitch or two to show for it, you still may want to hold off. Your body’s been through a lot over the last nine months or so, and



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 “You may at first want to take the available time you do have and hit the hay not the pavement.”  
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like a hard workout, that takes some time to recover from. PLUS, let’s not forget you’ll have a newborn in the house which equates to a massive lack of sleep. You may at first want to take the available time you do have and hit the hay not the pavement. Don’t feel guilty if you find you need to take a week (or more) to get used to things before you get back to it.

If you do happen to be one of the few, the proud, the 4% who have some seriously nice wounds following childbirth (such as moi), I’d not even think about running for awhile. Hide the shoes if you must. Even when you think you’re good to go, wait a little longer or you might find all those wounds re-opening in a way that’s more painful than they were when you originally scored them. I. Am. Not. Kidding. And besides being painful, it’s nearly devastating, and will set you all the way back to the “I’ll never be myself again. EVER” stage of postpartum, at a point when you nearly thought you WERE yourself again. You’ll get there Mama. I promise. The more severe the tearing, the longer I’d hold off. The 6 week post partum visit with your OB/GYN sounds about right.

**4) Do not assume you are the same super fit speedster you were in high school, college, pre-baby, or whenever you last donned some**

**kicks.** Sadly, you are not. Chances are you are far from it. Plan accordingly. Plan conservatively. If you think you could probably run a mile ok, then start with a 1/2 mile sandwiched in between some walking. Set yourself up to win rather than have a miserable run, thus most likely making it your last run. You can always bump up the mileage on a subsequent run or run on a little when you’ve finished if you’re still feeling good. However, if you set the bar too high for yourself, and you run out farther than you are actually capable of, you’ve got no choice. You are dragging your sorry defeated butt all the way back home unless you take your cell phone with you and can call in the cavalry to come pick you up.

Keep in mind too that the effects of that first run might not kick in until the next day at which point you’ll know if you pushed yourself more than you should have for run numero uno because you’ll be walking around as if you were one of those 4% of women I mentioned above and the word “Ow” will be coming out of your mouth on a somewhat frequent basis, particularly if you live in a home with stairs.

Same goes for pace as well as distance. As a general rule of thumb, run those first few runs at a pace at which you could hold a conversation, quite possibly being a pace just barely above a walk. In fact, run/walking is a FANTASTIC option that I highly recommend to new runners. It's a great way to build endurance and mileage safely while at the same time giving you a longer initial workout than a new runner would likely be able to complete. There's no shame in walking. There are plenty of veteran runners who use a run/walk combo for ALL of their runs, even competing in marathons with that strategy. In fact, my OB/GYN qualified for the Boston Marathon on his very first marathon attempt and he ran/walked the whole thing! (run/walk intervals of 10:1 for those of you who must know).

But the #1 Cardinal Rule of Running is this: Too much too soon is too much. Never forget it! That goes for pace. That goes for distance. That even goes for types of terrain. Doing too much before your body is physically ready to handle it will at best lead to decreased performance and at worst, injury. Not good. So ease yourself into running slooooooooooooooooooowly.

**5.) Don't make it harder than it has to be. Running 5, 6, or 7 days a week is quite an accomplishment, but for the new runner, usually, it's just too much.** Don't make me repeat that Cardinal Rule. Not only can it lead to injury, it can lead to burnout, big time. I have never met a person who decided to take up running and successfully ran 7 days a week. Although I have known some who've tried. Are these athletic phenoms out there? Sure. But for the average Jane Doe wanna become a runner, it's more likely that they'll continue running if they start somewhere in between 3 and 5 days (maybe even only 1 or 2 if they're actively engaged in some other form of cross training).

Why? I have no real scientific data to back me up on this, but I would venture to guess it's because people need a little break every once in awhile, both mentally and physically. It's ok to take a night off and chill out on the couch watching your favorite shows or spend an extra hour in the morning in bed. And like I said earlier, sometimes life just gets in the way: a sick kiddo, a surprise guest from out of town, or a late night at work. And when life comes at you, sometimes you've got to take the time to handle it and running can't always be a part of that. Give yourself a little bit of flexibility when you first start and your commitment is most vulnerable. Once



“Set yourself up to win rather than have a miserable run, thus most likely making it your last run.”



you've consistently made running a part of your weekly routine and you're pretty well grounded, THEN add in another day or two. It'll be more likely to stick.

**6.) Don't be afraid to run outside or at a gym or track or any other place where other humans might lay eyes on you.** Because guess what? We've all been that newbie runner at some point or another. Quite frankly, when I see that guy running that I described to you in the intro as I drive along, it takes every ounce of self control I have to not roll down my window and cheer him along. Runners, for the most part, are a very supportive group. Sure we've got our snobs here and there, but they're few and far between. The majority of runners out there are always excited to welcome a new runner to the ranks and more than willing to offer some encouragement. So even though you may not feel like a rock star runner out there on your first run and you may not hear your adoring fans cheering out loud, rest assured my friend, we ARE cheering as we pass you by, (we just don't want to scare you with our car horn or outrageous howling). Furthermore, I guarantee, as you run along thinking everybody's making fun of you, somebody is out there being inspired by you. They're thinking, "You know what, if she can run, I can run too." Running is contagious. BIG TIME.

**7.) Don't run with your super fit cousin. At least not on your first run.** Or at least not without warning her that you are a brand new runner and you expect to be running a really easy pace. Otherwise you may find it ridiculously annoying to be sucking wind

after a few minutes while she's talking about it being such a nice day and perhaps you guys should consider running a little farther than originally planned.

It's awesome to have a running partner. They can make the time on a run fly by. It is not awesome to have a running partner that ends your run far sooner than you intended because you attempted to keep up with them and just couldn't...yet. Yes, runners love new runners. And a friend or family member who's already a runner would probably LOVE to go out for a run with you, but you've got to be upfront and honest with them too so they know where you're you are. Surely, they want you to succeed, but they can't help you do that unless you let them. And running faster or farther than you are capable of to try to keep up with someone who's got more experience than you = not succeeding.

**8.) Don't tell the negative ninny's in your life you're running right away. They must be addressed, even though I dread giving them the space in this article.** Everybody's got 'em. You know who I'm talking about. You could have just won the Noble Prize, found the cure for cancer, broke the world record for the marathon, it wouldn't matter. These people would find something to try to take the wind out of your sails. It's like they thrive on it. Don't even give them a chance. In a few months when they're asking you how you lost so much weight or how you have so much energy, then you can spill it. That way when they start dumping all their negativity out on you, you can secretly remind yourself that they were just moments earlier basically paying you a compliment (their funny little way of saying "you've lost weight!" or "you're so energetic!"), a compliment that you earned via the very method they're trying to tear down, running. So you smile, nod, and go run some more.

**9.) DO NOT EVER GIVE UP!** ALL runners have ups and downs, good runs and bad runs. ALL OF US. So don't beat yourself up if you happen to find yourself in the middle of a not-so-good run. It happens. You shake it off and run another day. The benefits of running far outweigh any bad run you'll ever have...*but only if you don't give up.*

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 Kelly Collins is a runner, writer, blogger, wife and stay at home mamma to two beautiful and wildly entertaining little girls ages 2 and 4. She is currently training for her 4th marathon and studying to become a certified running coach. To read her latest adventure visit *Secrets of A Running Mom* ([www.runfastmommy.com](http://www.runfastmommy.com)).  
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# Ask the PT

By Eric Tomei

I get pain in the posterior tibial tendon area whenever I distance run on rounded rural roads. Do you have any recommendations?

Most likely you are experiencing a bout of posterior tibial tendonitis. It is common in runners, not so common in the general population. Let's review what is first before we provide recommendations. Tendonitis is an inflammation of any structure in the body that connects a muscle to a bone. It is most often an overuse or repetitive movement type injury. The posterior tibial tendon attaches to the back of the shin bone, passes down the back of the leg, goes almost all the way down to the achilles tendon and then turns under the inner side of the ankle and attaches to a bone on the inner side of the foot, just adjacent to the arch of the foot.

So what does all that gobbley-gook mean? It means that if you are experiencing pain on the inner side of the arch, the back of the calf or by the big bone on the inside of your foot, you could be aggravating the heck out of that posterior tibial tendon. When it gets inflamed, it gets really pissed off, especially with running activities.

The symptoms to look for are the following: pain along the inside of the ankle or arch of the foot, difficulty turning your toes inward, inability to stand on your toes on your affected side, and flattened arches. In about 50% of the cases, a recent ankle sprain has been linked to the incidence of posterior tibial tendonitis. You could have one or more of these symptoms, but you don't have to have all of them. Should you experience any of these symptoms, don't freak out, take a deep breath, and take a break from running or any other physical activity for 1-2 weeks. Often, inactivity will allow the inflammation from the tendonitis to calm down to the point of resolution.

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"When it gets inflamed, it gets really pissed off, especially with running activities."

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Now if you are like any of my patients, they do not want to hear that they have to stop to do anything. I recommend 4 things to combat posterior tibial tendonitis:

1. **Proper footwear** - A good pair of properly fit running shoes to a runner is like food to a starving man at a buffet line. Go without either and it isn't pretty. Even if you spend a little bit more on the shoes, for as much as you run your feet are worth it.
2. **Anti-inflammatory medications** - Ok, so nobody wants to be a druggie, and nobody says you have to. But anti-inflammatory medications combined with rest and avoidance of activity can work miracles on your foot and ankle for a 1-2 week time period.
3. **Orthotics** - These are simple shoe inserts that are sometimes custom fit to your foot and sometimes they are not depending on the severity of the problem in your ankle or foot. If you suspect that you have flat feet or high arches and you are still having pain in your foot, let an orthopedic surgeon have a look at you.
4. **Road kill** - No, not the stinky dead animal carcassy kind but the surface you are running on could be killing your feet. Be sure if you are having pain, that you are running on either an outdoor or indoor track, or as level terrain as possible. If you are doing any kind of hill work make sure the grass/earthy surface you are



“Be sure if you are having pain, that you are running on either an outdoor or indoor track, or as level terrain as possible.”

running on is firm. The forces are more evenly-distributed on your feet with the more level surface. Basically avoid, if you are having any pain in your feet, roads that are rounded with uneven terrain. Your feet will thank you after the run.

The most important thing I always stress is listen to your body, always. If it's in pain, do not ignore the cry for help. It is hurting for a reason. It is hard, especially with runners, to have them understand this as there is always a goal or race to run. But trust me! Listening to your feet now, will prevent you from having a lifetime of problems.



Eric Tomei is a physical therapist who has been in orthopedic practice for 10 years. He currently works in Rochester, MI as a staff physical therapist and truly enjoys shaping the health of all his patients. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, a Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences and a Masters Degree in Physical Therapy from Oakland University. His passions include: Real estate investing, physical fitness, and volunteering for various charities in the metro Detroit area.



# Singing The Blues: Post-Race Funk

By Deanna Verbouwens

When I decided to train for my 4th half marathon I was pumped, ready and willing to take on the training and kill it. I was set to make this half marathon THE half marathon; you know the one that comes with bragging rights, the one where you are bursting at the seams like the Hoover Dam to spurt out your time at any moment and specifically when someone merely mentions the word running. Yea, like that.

As I began my 12 week training program, I trained hard and was satisfied with my progress. Having a strong mind to me is 90% of the battle. On my runs, specifically the long ones, I had determined that there were three goals, very specific goals that I wanted to meet: 1) 2:15 PR 2) At mile 12-13 push as hard as I could to "leave it all on the course" and last but not least 3) Don't succumb to the post-marathon funk. Three was most important to me because it affected so many aspects of my life. And since I was so mentally strong, one and two seemed like a cake walk. Right?

"Having a strong mind to me is 90% of the battle."

What is post-marathon funk? It's basically the blues, when a runner feels melancholy or depressed after a race. After weeks of tirelessly training and crossing the finish line, getting the medal, the thrill of the chase is, well, over and literally what's next?

Having experienced the post-marathon funk before, I certainly did not want to experience it again. I've only been running for three years, and the post-marathon blues hit me with all three half marathons. It's like as soon as I cross the finish line some little evil devil takes over my brain, moves some serotonin around like a street thug playing Three-Card Monty, and BAM I'm done.

During this half-marathon at around mile nine when I was chugging up that un-Godly hill in Central Park (for the second time mind you) I knew that in three more miles the promise I made myself to leave it all on the course was not going to happen which meant that my PR would not happen. I was actually listening to my most motivating song - Eminem's "Lose Yourself". "The moment, you own it. You better never let it go. You only get one shot. Do not miss your chance to blow. This opportunity comes once in a lifetime..." and I literally said to myself, "Deanna, you'll have other opportunities to run a half marathon...". Yeah, I really did. I hung myself out to dry. So much for being mentally strong. So I let it go. I didn't get my PR, and I never left a thing on the course, well except my pride and my ego.

I got into a funk before I even crossed the finish line.

For a good week and half (which is huge in a runner's psyche) the mere thought of running or engaging in any other activity made me cry, not because I was in pain. Ironically, I could walk, sit and climb stairs with ease. I shed tears because I really thought that I'd never run again; to throw more salt on my already gaping wound I ate my way through



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"I got into a funk before I even crossed the finish line."

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life. Every time I passed my running sneakers I felt queasy, a tightness in my chest, and a little dizzy. It could have been the McDonalds, bagels upon bagels, chips, chocolate, iced-mocha whatever, and donuts that were coursing through my body. I am not sure. What I am sure about is that this snowballed and I got more depressed, felt sluggish, and dumpy which lead to even more self-loathing and three more days of self-pity. I was mad at myself. Mad that I didn't weight train as much as I should have, mad that I let myself down, and mad that I gave up.

15 days in, and my pants were tight, my brain clogged from too much fried food. I knew like half-marathons past that the only way to get over this was to... run. It took a day or two to muster up the courage but I did it. I ran 6 miles and realized that I indeed can still run. I love to run. I need to run, and that yes, I will have another opportunity, another half marathon to make it THE half marathon. When I do, I will certainly pick up my pride and ego that I left on the course a few weeks ago.

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"I shed tears because I really thought that I'd never run again."

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Deanna Verbouwens is a writer, runner, blogger, working mom of two unbelievably active and very funny boys ages 3 and 7. Deanna is currently training for her 4th half marathon, and her third 24 hour relay, and various 10 & 5k's, of course that all between working full time, and managing spaghetti on the ceiling, a dumped out fish bowl, a house and a family. To catch up on how Deanna tries to get it all done without completely failing visit her at The Unnatural Mother, [www.theunnaturalmother.com](http://www.theunnaturalmother.com).

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# Recipe to Run On

By Kim Kopp

Having spent most of my life tall and thin, I relied upon my metabolism to keep my weight in check. As my age increased, my metabolism decided to slow down. Combine that with my love of cooking Paula Deen style, and I found myself at my heaviest weight ever.

So on February 21, 2011 my husband and I joined Weight Watchers online to keep our intake of food in check and to lose the extra weight. We began to see weight loss, but not at the rate we had hoped.

It was time to leave our sedentary life behind. I decided to get back into running (something I had started and stopped a few times in my 20's & early 30's - but never going more than 3 miles) and graduated the "Couch-to-5K" training program in April of 2011. Shortly thereafter, I was reminded by my doctor that "as we get older, it's especially important we do consistent weight training" and I joined a local gym. (Gotta love the "as we get older part".)

Healthy eating and exercise? Go Figure! And guess what...it works!

But if you've ever gone from a sedentary life of eating whatever sounds good to making healthy exercise and food choices - you know it's not the easiest transition. For a lot of us, food can be something we use to soothe our hurts, treat ourselves to as rewards, or be something we just can't imagine giving up. Our natural flesh wants what it wants.

So after years of eating whatever I pleased, I remember a day in February when I realized, it was up to me. And me alone. No one was home. No one would've known what I ate or didn't eat or how much. Did I really want to make healthy changes to my life? Did I really want to lose the extra weight? Did I want to look good and feel good? Did I want to be a role model for my family? Did I really want to change?

"I was reminded by my doctor that "as we get older, it's especially important we do consistent weight training."





We can all use whatever excuse we want. We can hide in the dark and think we are getting away with what isn't seen. But the bottom line comes down to this: do I want to be healthy or do I want to feed my flesh?

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**"No one (not even the crazy fit folks) has some natural inclination of being healthy. It's a choice."**

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I'm so grateful that I made the decision to commit to making healthy food choices and to running. I've gained SO much. Food is no longer my reward. Yes, I enjoy indulging myself occasionally. But, my bigger rewards are how I look and feel. Not carrying around the baggage of excess weight frees you to be more energetic and alive. My rewards come from my kiddos cheering me on at racing events. And my rewards come from knowing I'm setting a good example for my family that will make lasting impacts on their lives.

If you struggle with food and exercise choices, know that you are not alone. No one (not even the crazy fit folks) has some natural inclination of being healthy. It's a choice. Every single time I go out for a run or choose a salad instead of a burger it's a choice and not one that feels natural to me. But oh, the reward is so much bigger than you can imagine.

PART of my problem in gaining so much weight had to do with my night-time eating habits. I would tuck my kids into bed and then feel free to treat myself. Nightly. Without humiliating myself publicly, it's safe for you to assume that my desserts were large and highly caloric.

After starting this journey toward healthy living, I still craved desserts. But I worked to find better options. That's how today's recipe was created.

This is a great option in the summer. You can enjoy it alone or you can "bulk it up" if you're feeling extra hungry by adding a VitaTop, fruit or a Fiber One Brownie.

### **Frozen Greek Yogurt**

- 17-18 oz. Container Greek Frozen Yogurt
- 1 TBSP Honey
- 1 TSP Vanilla
- 1 Ripe Banana, mashed or pureed or Your Favorite Fruit
- (I think berries would be delish too!)

In the container of Greek Yogurt, add all ingredients and mix well. Freeze for at least two hours. Serve alone, with toppings, or over your favorite base. Pictured: I melted chocolate chips and chopped roasted almonds.

**Weight Watchers Points Plus (without toppings): 2 Servings = 4; 3 Servings = 3; 4 Servings = 2**

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Kim Kopp has been married to her high school sweetheart for over 16 years and is mom to a son and daughter. After begin-



ning to run again in February, she has run three 5Ks, a 5 Miler, and is currently training for her first 1/2 marathon. Kim blogs at [www.RecipesToRunOn.com](http://www.RecipesToRunOn.com) where she shares recipes as well as her health and fitness journey.

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“You’re running on guts. On fumes. Your muscles twitch. You throw up. You’re delirious. But you keep running because there’s no way out of this hell you’re in, because there’s no way you’re not crossing the finish line. It’s a misery that non-runners don’t understand.”

- **Martine Costello** (running quote on the New York Marathon)

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# This Mother Can Run