

This Mother Can Run



“I do 10-15 miles per run.”

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This Mother Can Run

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So You Want to Run a Marathon?

Getting to the starting line will take more than just training.

Marathon madness has gripped the running community and females are making up an increasing percentage of those toeing the line. You may be thinking about joining this expanding group, and if so, congratulations. A first marathon is an empowering and exciting experience.

You're probably already looking at the various training plans and methods for running your first 26.2. While the training plan you choose is certainly important, if you're a mom, another type of plan needs to come into play as well: A time management plan. Most marathon training plans will require that you work up to running between 40 and 50 miles per week. That's both time consuming and energy consuming. If you want to make it to the start line energized—and still have the time you need to meet your daily responsibilities—you've got to work at fitting it all in.

Get out the calendar

The first thing you need to do is get out your calendar and write in all of your planned runs leading up to the marathon. Most plans have you going long on the weekends. Compare these long runs to your family's schedule: Do you regularly attend church on Sundays? Then maybe Saturday is the best

day for your long runs. Lots of kids' soccer games to work around? Hitting the pavement at 6 a.m. may be what it takes.

If you are going to run long on a Saturday or Sunday, you'll probably need to look at your evening social obligations. You don't want to live like a monk during marathon training, but you may need to scale back on some of your outings. A late night before a

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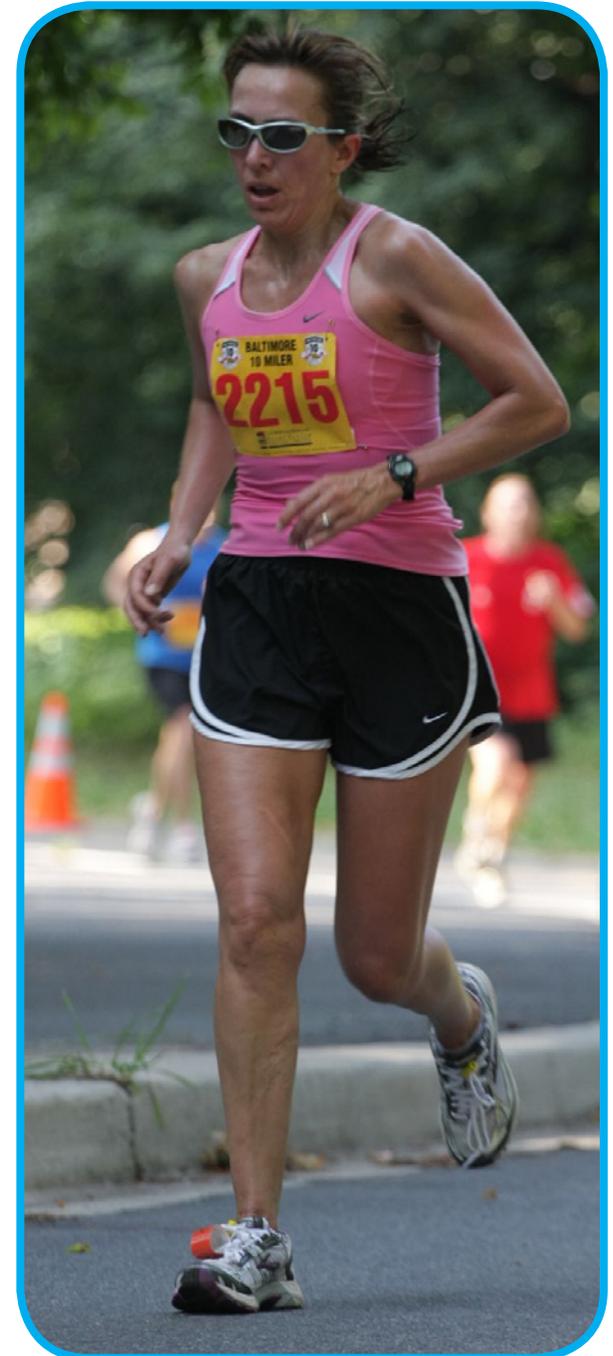
“You've got to work at fitting it all in.”

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20-miler doesn't usually produce the best results.

Also consider this—doing a 20-miler takes plenty of energy. On those days, finding time to take a quick nap may become a priority. Try to schedule it in between other activities.

Weekdays will probably require some juggling too. If you still have kids at home, then early morning or evening runs are probably a reality. A traveling spouse? Another challenge, but one you can work around. At-home treadmills or gyms that offer child-care are often the solution here.



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A Mother and a Runner



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Work it out with the spouse

And speaking of your spouse, while he may be all for your running a marathon, keep in mind that he'll be making sacrifices to make it happen. If he likes to work out also, you may need to develop a schedule alternating early morning or evening sessions. Make sure he gets his fair share of workout time—that will go a long way towards making your important running time a reality.

Also keep in mind that your husband may need to shoulder a little extra “kid time” to help you achieve your goal. Most don't mind this at all, but show your appreciation for his efforts. Let him get in that extra day golf or game of basketball with friends.

Post-marathon

When your big day has finally come and gone, take some down time to celebrate, rest, and reflect on what worked or didn't work for you timing wise. Chances are you'll be able to identify some points throughout your past training schedule that could use some improvement time management wise. Write these down and keep them handy for the next marathon training cycle as they might help ease the way for you.

More than anything, don't stress about fitting it all in. You're doing this because you enjoy it—don't let fitting it all in become a source of stress to you. A little planning can go a long way to making marathon training as much fun as the race day itself. Good luck!

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Amanda Loudin has been running and competing in triathlons for the past 13 years. She is also a certified running coach, freelance writer and mom to two. She writes about balancing it all on her blog, www.misszippy1.blogspot.com, and offers running advice on her coaching site, www.misszippycoaches.blogspot.com.



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“Don't let fitting it all in become a source of stress to you.”
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Food Will Not Be Ruling This House

We've been on a downhill slip 'n slide this summer into the deep dark hole of sweets, treats and fast food. And folks, it ain't good.

A couple of weeks ago, I realized that our rotating lunch schedule pretty much consists of frozen pizza, mac & cheese and grilled cheese, and it's nearly always followed by my 4 year old requesting dessert of some kind. And if that's not bad enough, stick us in a car anytime within about 1/2 an hour of a meal and we're probably not passing by the multitude of fast food joints to go home for a salad. I mean, really, when you pull into the drive through at Taco Bell and you hear your not quite 2 year old in the back going "yummmmmmm," it's kind of funny. But when she does it at pretty much every single fast food restaurant? Yeah...then you've got a serious problem on your hands (not that I'm talking about my 2 year old or anything).

And it's not just the kids and finding something that they actually WILL eat, it's us grownups too. I'm so busy taking care of everybody else's needs that by the time I

get around to eating, I'm STARVING. Then I will pretty much just grab whatever's there (which is usually full of sugar or comes out of a bag and/or box), and that generally does not end well. And my poor husband! Let's just say he's simply defenseless against all the goodies I keep on hand to try and bribe my children to eat.

So before this family is too far gone, I decided to take control. I'm the grocery shopper/meal preparer around this house; though I will gladly acquiesce both of these titles to someone else (anyone else...takers?). So if there are going to be healthy eating habits around these parts, it's going to start with me. Period.

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"I'm so busy taking care of everybody else's needs that by the time I get around to eating, I'm STARVING."

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Ironically, for the little extra encouragement I needed to get started, I had planned on purchasing some new cookware. (Hey, you do what you gotta do right? Who wants to make healthy tasting dishes in ratty old pots and pans anyway?) I was thinking of something perhaps along the lines of Le Creuset. And wouldn't you know it? It was right about then that Jamie from CSN Stores contacted me to see if I'd do a review for them. I could pick anything I wanted to review. There are over 200 stores on this virtual mall carrying all sorts of different products, everything from toys to ceiling fans, including...COOKWARE!! I was chomping at the bit.



But drastic times called for drastic measures, and I could not wait for new cookware. So, I got started. I planned out our meals; I cleaned out the fridge and pantry, pitching every single garbage food item I could find (including the fossilized pickles), and I restocked it with healthier goods. I moved the snacks up to a higher shelf so little hands can't get at them unaided but kept the fruit & veggies easily accessible. And I went puree crazy with the hopes that I'd be able to slip a few fruits and veggies into the dishes I prepare for my kiddos (and husband) unnoticed a la Jessica Seinfeld and her Deceptively Delicious cookbook.

It's been about two weeks now, and except for a late night tango with a can of mild cheddar cheese dip my husband bought for me after a particularly rough day (it was a weak moment), and an end of summer field day/party at my mom's full of eats that aren't quite on our menu anymore, I'm happy to say we've been doing pretty well. I've discovered my 4 year old LOVES celery, and my anti-veggie 2 year old will happily devour



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“If I just take 15-20 minutes to plan out our meals for the week and write up my grocery list accordingly, I’m good.”

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them if they are disguised as something else, like say cheese sticks for example. (It had cauliflower in it if you must know, but don't tell).

Now the trick I believe will be sticking with it, and the key to that might just be in the meal planning. If I just take 15-20 minutes to plan out our meals for the week and write up my grocery list accordingly, I'm good. The danger sets in when I grocery shop on a whim with no plan. I might as well go in hungry too because I'm probably stocking my cart with things that may look tasty, but I probably don't actually need and would be woefully disappointed if I ate (at least after I ate it anyway).

Old habits die hard, and this isn't the first time I've hit the reset button. So how do you stay on track and keep your family's diet in check? And what sort of things do you keep on hand so that when the “I'm huuuuuuuuuu-ungryyyyyyy” whine creeps in - in the middle of your making dinner, you're prepared? Honestly, this may be far harder than the marathon for me. Seriously.

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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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“I always loved running...
it was something you could do
by yourself,
and under your own power.
You could go in any direction,
fast or slow as you wanted,
fighting the wind if you felt like
it, seeking out new
sights just on the strength of
your feet and the courage of
your lungs.”

Jesse Owens

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This “Cougar” Can Run

Joan van Ark has been Tony nominated on Broadway, won three Soap Opera Digest Awards, received the Humanitas Award’s nomination for directing and creating a world premiere Tennessee William’s character at the Kennedy Center in Five by Tenn, and she says her beautiful daughter, Vanessa, is her greatest accomplishment. Joan has been an avid runner for over four decades now. She ran throughout her career as an actress on hit TV shows Dallas and Knots Landing among others. One would think after all this time that her enthusiasm for running would wane, but as you will see, her drive is amazing!

This mother can run!

Q: Everyone knows you as an actress, but not everyone knows you are a runner. When did you start running and why?

A: I went over to London and did a play when I was about 19 years old. It was “Barefoot in the Park”. My husband-to-be was stationed in Germany. We’re high school sweethearts. He talked me into going through Paris and then to Germany. He proposed in Paris, and we got married in Germany on the air force base, Spangdahlem Air Force Base. He was in armed forces radio and television. He has always been a newscaster. I’ve always been an actress. On the air force base I got so wacky because I basically worked all my life since I was 14 years old, where I started in local theatre in Boulder, Colorado. At any rate, there I was on the air force base at 19.

I taught the guys a class on acting at night. During the day I would run the football fields. So I think what it was with me, is what it always is: there was an extra energy within me that I needed to burn off. I have never taken tranquilizers or anything like that. Running is so many things to me. It is somewhat of a tranquilizer, and it helped me burn off energy by running around the football field. My next biggest step was when I did a play called “School for Wives Moliere”, which went to Broadway. One of the guys in the cast was a marathon runner. I started working out with him before rehearsals. Some days he would tell me, “You know we did 17 miles today.” We would go distance, say before the rehearsal even. I can’t imagine doing that now. I think about that now, and I would never do that now if I had a rehearsal



or work commitment ahead of me. I don’t have that much energy any more. I have to be very careful with my energy output.

Q: How have you stayed in such great shape?

A: For my whole life, to me, physical fitness is mental fitness. Yes, I want to stay in great shape and always have. But like anybody else, I work very hard at it. I eat clean. That means eating vegetables with lemon juice, no processed salad dressing on them, lemon juice and some olive oil, squash, spinach. Spinach is important when I’m working because I want every brain cell working. I have lemon juice with Splenda, and that’s not so clean because



Joan on set for “Nip Tuck”

I know Splenda is not so great. It’s a kind of lemonade that I do. No salt. I use a salt substitute. That’s another chemical so that’s not great. But eating clean just means eating unprocessed fruits and vegetables, no dairy, unless I have a cheat day, and that, by the way, I’m all for once every week or two weeks. A cheat day is when you say, “Screw it! I’m eating whatever I feel like having.” If I’m working I have five little meals. I sort of graze all day on unsalted peanut butter, bananas and honey. That’s in my set bag to keep my blood sugar right where I want it. The bananas provide potassium, and the honey provides a glucose boost to your brain. I keep it close when I’m on set because sometimes I’ll have a 14-18 hour day, and I have to stay level. I’ve always

been physical. I do value keeping a shape and not becoming that most dreaded English word-- matronly. You can forget about that! I’m not going there! Cougar yes, matron no. Those are the parts I’ve been playing lately – cougar or desperate housewife. I’m happy for that. I do work out, and I do monitor it, but then I have my cheat days too because everybody needs to do that or you can’t stay on your diet.

Q: How often do you run? How far do you run? What makes running enjoyable for you?

A: My mantra is work or work out. I try to do it every day. If I have to be Super Joan Van Ark, getting into full drag, hair and make up, then I give myself a day off. But pretty much, I run every day. I do 10-15 miles per run. I have done 17 mile days if I’m feeling strong and I want to. Now some people think that’s just sick, but Will Ferrell runs 15 miles a day when he’s not on the set. It’s not horrific for someone who’s high energy and an A type personality. I’ve been really blessed to not have any injuries all this time. As far as what makes running enjoyable, I think where I am makes the difference. For example, last week we were in Colorado for a family wedding, and I ran almost to Timberline. It was a 10 mile loop. It was the hardest, most difficult one I’ve done in a VERY long time. There were spots of rock that I could barely walk up! I didn’t want to slip.

It was a 10 mile intense mountain trail run. Well, I would not say run. I would say jog. I did a movie in Tokyo, Japan, and I ran around the Emperor’s Palace. I’ve run in London. I’ve run everywhere. Where I am is what makes it enjoyable. The other thing is if I’m facing a choice, a decision, problems, stress, just plain stuff, I feel like running works it out. I get a focus, a vision, an instinct of how to solve that problem. It always happens on the run. So that’s another thing that makes it enjoyable. I don’t see a shrink. I don’t take tranquilizers. I take B-12 and extra potassium. That’s all I take. That’s it. I don’t want to take anything else. I’m not saying it’s wrong if others do, but it’s just not my thing. I think my running has kept me pretty clean my whole adult life.

Q: How many marathons have you run?

A: I think it’s 13. It was 12, but I just did the L.A. Marathon. So now it’s 13, including Boston. You have to qualify for Boston, and I qualified with a 3:26. I think that’s pretty good. I could never do that now. I’m embarrassed to tell you my L.A. time. It was a

“I do 10-15 miles per run.”

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few minutes under 5 hours, but it was just 20 minutes after Shia Labeouf. He came in at 4:35. I came in just under 5. If I'm 20 minutes after Shia Labeouf, I'm not so bad after all.

Q: What was your first marathon like and when was it? How did you do?

A: The first one I don't know the year, but it was the Mission Bay Marathon, in Mission Bay, CA. I over trained because it was a January or February run. It was rainy season in LA, and I got the flu. I told Dr. Blake, my general MD, who knew me and knew my personality, that I had to do this. I had trained, and yes, I had the flu, but I was going to do this no matter what. He said, "Joan, I know you. I know nothing is going to stop you." So he prescribed a pretty strong antibiotic for me to take a few days before, and I even took it on the run with water. I did the marathon in 4 something, maybe 4:34. It wasn't great, but it was my first one. I was determined to finish. Once I start a marathon, I never stop. So in other words, in the movie with Joanne Woodward (See How She Runs) she stopped in the middle of a marathon, had dinner, and she came across the finish line at midnight. No, no,



no! That's not an option. Once you start, you've got to keep going.

Q: Why did you choose to do races?

A: Races is a bad word because "races" sounds competitive to me. My life and the work I do is highly competitive. So I don't know that I would use the word races. I do them, and I have done some 5Ks and 10Ks for my sister, who had ovarian cancer (but is in remission). I don't like that word. So I do these runs for a sense of accomplishment and purpose for a greater cause or a charity. In doing marathons, it's the sense of accomplishment because only you can do it. There are no retakes. It's all you, doing your own performance. There's a great feeling

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"There's a great feeling of completion and competition with myself to do better each time."

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of completion and competition with myself to do better each time. I also do these runs to get a PR. I like it for my own character building. It's not about who's the best 1, 2, and 3 but about making ME better.

Q: Do you get a lot of unwanted attention at races or are you able to blend in with the crowd? What is your racing experience like?

A: I can pretty much blend in because I use my married name to enter the race. But there are guys who come up behind me in a race and tell me, "I know who you are, but I'm not going to say anything." Or they say, "Looking good!" They say these things as they pass me and leave me in the dust! Sometimes from the side I have people say things. In LA one guy said, "Hey Joan! Looking good!" So I get some attention, but I'm wearing

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dark glasses and a pony tail. I don't know how "Joan Van Ark" I look.

Q: How has your journey with running changed or evolved? When you first started, did you love it or hate it? Is it easier now? Was it easier then?

A: It definitely has changed. At first it was an energy releaser especially when I wasn't working on the air force base in Germany. Then as I started to work it became a focus and homework space where I could work out a character. It's great clear-thinking time. When I was pregnant I ran through my pregnancy, and that was just to stay who I am, I guess. My gynecologist said, "No problem," because I gained something very ridiculously low like 11-12 pounds. I did work all the way up until she was born. I played a bride, while I was 5 months pregnant, on



“Running now gives me solitude and a purpose many days when I don't have the kind of challenge that I would like to have as an actress.”



a Folger's commercial. I didn't tell anybody but the wardrobe girl that I was pregnant. So I stayed kind of small when I was pregnant. More than ever now, it is a retreat. Without a doubt it is a retreat. I get very depressed when I don't work, and it's a space I can count on. When I grew up in Colorado, I rode horse back. Running now gives me solitude and a purpose many days when I don't have the kind of challenge that I would like to have as an actress. So I've always loved it. It started out as physical and has wound up as mental. It's almost harder now because I do it every day and I'm slower, older and more tired! I can kick butt and do an 8 minute mile, but I can't sustain it. My best mile was somewhere around a 6:11 mile or a little less. Now I'm just plugging along. If I have to, I will kick it up. I think my plugging along keeps me in the zone. In the LA marathon, I was doing sub 9 minute miles up until 10 or 12 miles in. And then because I realized that I was running faster than my normal pace, which is 10:00 to 12:00, (I always do that because of the adrenaline) I pulled back. I am not doing good miles at all right now. When I don't have to, I don't. I'm just out there to work out.

Q: What motivates you to run? Is it to stay in shape, to get clarity of mind, or something else?

A: It's all of those and it's also "bones and brains". I think it is good for your bones as you age because I had a bone density test, and they told me I have the bones of a 35 year old. When you exercise, it helps your bone density. I feel so much better having

done it. I need it to work out problems physically and mentally. It's all of the above, but for me it's kind of like brushing my teeth. It's just part of my day.

Q: What do you think is more important to maintain a great figure, exercise or nutrition? Why?

A: Well, that is tricky because exercise pulls you and your body together, and nutrition is eating the right foods to sustain your energy but not to be too caloric as to add on pounds. Every person has to find the gas that makes their engine run best. I think exercise is absolutely key so that you can eat and enjoy life and not be denying yourself. Denying yourself doesn't lead anywhere except being unhappy about it and then binging. I think exercise is the key but the truth is finding nutrition with a food or foods that fill you, satisfy you, and give you the sustained energy to do the best job you can do – whatever job that is. Whether it's highly mental sitting at a desk, or stressful and mental which is my case on set...you look at the Olympic athletes like the swimmer, Michael Phelps. If you look at the spread he eats, that's his "gas". He can do it, and he's totally fit, and he performs at the top of his game. It's very individual but it takes listening to your body, getting a certain amount of exercise (the more the better, whatever you can tolerate), and listening to your body to figure out the right fuel.

Q: Having been a mother of small children and now grown children, which time

of your life did you find it harder to balance working out and being healthy? Why?

A: I only have one child, Vanessa. With my daughter when she was growing up, yes, it was hard to balance it all. I mean, Super Mom takes its toll. When my daughter was little, it was before they had these “push carts”. I run now, and I see dads and moms with these jogging strollers pushing their little ones. And I’m always saying, “Way to go!” I’m high-fiving them as I pass because I love it. But with me, I put Vanessa in a backpack with a popsicle! So I always ended up with orange stains down the middle of my back! And she was happy as a clam with

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“I put Vanessa in a backpack with a popsicle! So I always ended up with orange stains down the middle of my back!”

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the popsicle, and Mom was struggling along for both! Vanessa was in the backpack, and I would do 3-5 miles that way. That’s how I did it because I wasn’t going to stop my workouts. And I did work right after, very soon after having her. I was offered Days of

Our Lives on NBC soon after Vanessa was born. I was convinced that once you have a child you can’t remember lines anymore, you can’t act. I had to prove to myself that all of that was still there. So I took the offer almost right away. It is very hard to be Super Mom, but I absolutely am a firm believer that no matter what your age and no matter what your responsibilities are, you need to find a half hour to an hour to find “me” time, even if you take the little one with you which this generation is better at than in my generation. Take your little one or ones out on a run with you. Get them into that oxygen situation. Make time to break a sweat and bring your heart rate up. It is just so important.

Q: Your sister Carol has battled ovarian cancer. Tell us about how this disease has affected your family and what you have done to help.

A: There was a Stiletto Walk for Ovarian Cancer last year in April. I was looking for something to do with my sister to be sure she knows my commitment. I also was involved with the Revlon Run/Walk for Women with Cancers. I have done these races in honor of my sister. She is in remission now and in December of this year, she will be at her 5 year mark. It’s like Carol said, “When cancer comes into your life, it affects the whole family.” And God bless Carol because she is taking her husband in and out of Denver every two and a half weeks for his own radiation and chemotherapy treatment. I don’t know how she does it. She is a miracle. She is my hero. She is my inspiration. She gets it done. She’s everything I’m not, and I think she’s just amazing.

Q: I know you do a lot of charity work. Are you working on projects now? Are you promoting anything?



A: My family is in Colorado, specifically Boulder. My nephew, Derek, was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. I got involved with the Barbara Davis Juvenile Diabetes Center in Denver. I became part of their advisory board. They had a carousel ball in October. It's held every other year. The list of attendees sounded like an Oscar night because anybody who is anybody was at this carousel ball. Jay Leno hosted it this year. Jennifer Lopez performed. It's a very big evening. Over the years I've gotten involved with that. I donate jewelry or handbags for their auctions. I am also part of the Anne Douglas Center for Women. It's for the LA Mission in downtown LA. It's a place for women who are on the street, on drugs, and homeless. They take them in for six months to a year to rehabilitate them and then do a transition period where they place them in jobs in the local economy. It gets women

back on their feet. And I'm also part of the Farm Animal Sanctuary, which is preventing cruelty to farm animals, factory farming and the really abusive awful ways. There was just an article about Costco with young calves, their veal. They were abusing these calves, putting them in 3 foot crates with the wooden bar across their neck. It just makes me sick. Growing up in Colorado, being surrounded by farmland, I'm especially aware and sensitive to this. Those are pretty much my three main charities. I am committed to these issues. I feel very strongly about them.

Q: What are some things that you're busy working on right now?

A: Mostly now I've been doing voiceovers. I've also been doing some goofy characters on My Name is Earl and Nip Tuck. I play

high maintenance "cougars". Ironically, I did one show with Donna Mills on Nip Tuck, and on My Name is Earl, I was with Morgan Fairchild, and we played desperate housewives. It was hysterical, and I loved it. Then I just did a voiceover for a children's game called Fancy Nancy. It's a DVD game. It was a southern, socialite voiced character. I'm hoping to do a play. I need that soul food.

Overall, I believe so strongly that everyone at every age should eat clean, less processed, minimum dairy and stay physical to detoxify and de-stress so you can keep connected. Connected means mentally and physically you are one. I say eat the best foods that keep you happy. Don't deprive yourself.

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Before doing this article with Joan, I really didn't know the depth of her character. She is a very humble person considering all of her accomplishments. Joan is passionate about running and should be the poster child for lifelong running and how it can do your body good. She's a phenomenal role model for every one of us. She runs for pleasure yet she can kick it up and keep up with some of the speediest runners. One of the things that I learned about Joan during our phone conversations is that she is "laugh out loud" funny and knows how to find the humor in life. And finally, I learned that although Joan is small in stature, she has a big heart. Sometimes I think the media can cloud our vision about someone's character or sometimes the characters an actor portrays can be misinterpreted as who the actor is. Joan is warm, caring, friendly and down to earth. I feel honored to that I was able to interview her and learn from her experience and wisdom. I hope you enjoyed this interview as much as I did completing it! Enjoy this little flashback video of Joan...running on the beach: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17fdvv6J5Dg>

--Nanette Simmons, This Mother Can Run

Name: Joan van Ark

Q: Favorite running song and the artist/band

I don't run with music. I see everyone with iPods, but I don't. I like to run with nature, and God. I want to hear it and know. I get so lost in thought sometimes that I don't even hear anything. I need to hear cars around me. I want reality, and I want to deal with it. I never run with music because for me it's about getting away from the career-thinking and just letting my mind go.

Q: Favorite time of day to run

5:00 pm because the older I get the more aware I get of the sun, and I've had a whole lifetime of sun exposure. It's the cooler part of the day. I've finished my work. I used to say when I was on *The Young and the Restless* that I don't want to leave my performance on Elm Street in Beverly Hills. So I save my workout until after I've done my work obligations because I need every molecule and every ounce of energy and focus for the set. So 5-7 pm is my favorite time.

Q: How do you prefer to train?

alone Now I just train alone and do fartleks or distance definitely alone.
 with a partner

in a group I trained for Boston in a group under Lazlo Tabouri, who is the second man to break the 5 minute mile. He's a Hungarian runner, now a running coach.

Q: Most scenic place you've ever run

There are so many. The Japanese Alps were beautiful. I ran up there and around the Emperor's Palace. That was quite amazing. Just last week in Colorado, I did a 10 mile route in Estes Park. It was pretty spectacular. I ran through meadows, yellow daisies, close to Timberline, through woods, and to a place where I could see a whole expanse of Rocky Mountains. It might have been one of the prettiest.



Q: Average miles per run

10-15

Q: Where do you usually run?

treadmill

outside always outside!

Q: Why did you start running?

to get in shape

to get back to pre-pregnancy weight

for fun at the air force base

for sport

other to take my mind off where I was and to burn energy and feel a sense of accomplishment

Q: Favorite race distance

5K (so I can kick it and do my
7-8 minute miles)

10K

1/2 marathon

marathon My favorite! I've done 13, and I'm still going to do a couple more. I want to do one - it's called The Land of the Giants. It's up in the sequoias, up along the coast of California.

Q: What do you do while running?

listen to music

watch TV

talk

think times 100!

other I take my lines, and I absorb them on the run.

Q: Favorite running gadget or gear

My most favorite new toy is my Garmin GPX. I cannot live without this now. It's more important to me than my rings!





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Just Me and My Feet

“I thought that “gear” is what would make me a better runner.”

I have come to not need as much as I thought I did at one time in my life. One of the big epiphanies occurred when I ditched my running shoes (which I did not just intuitively do either). I thought that I “needed” shoes and that my husband was a loon for suggesting that I didn’t. I thought that “gear” is what would make me a better runner. Sometimes that is true but only to an extent and only depending on your own expectations of yourself. If you want to run just open the door and go. I changed how I saw running and I fell in love with that primal act that my body was made to do.

I like to drive. It is very relaxing. There is something about the simple movement through time and space. I find it soothing and lovely. This is how I feel about running only even more so. I love to have my own two feet moving me forward, finding that sweet spot where the discomfort doesn’t matter any more, and I feel as if I could run forever. Those moments are what keep me coming back, like the times when the thoughts flow and move as they



“I love to have my own two feet moving me forward, finding that sweet spot where the discomfort doesn't matter any more, and I feel as if I could run forever.”

please, when I feel connected to the earth and the air. Yeah, it sounds like a bunch of hippy shit but all the rest of you runners know what I mean, and if you don’t, then you are maybe at a point where you might want to reevaluate why you run.

For some of those who are lost right now and have misplaced your mojo, here is my advice. Say “frak it” and just go out and run. No watch, no expectations, no Garmin. If it’s hard to even get out there, make a goal to just get out there - not to burn calories but just to move your feet. You can turn around and change your mind, but you must get out there to at least give it a shot. That’s all. There will be more races down the road. There will be more opportunities to show what you’ve got, but really what else is there besides you and the road? I like to think that your mojo will return somewhere around the time you stop looking for it. You know, like lost keys.

I have these expectations I put on myself and they really are just something I decide on. I get wrapped up in them and then the competitive nature in me gets fired up. Reading some Super Runner’s blog, I feel like a slacker. I can go all out for a while



and kick some major arse, but it's hard to keep it up. That's when I want to just go back to my mellow ways. What always eventually occurs to me is that I like to run, and it doesn't matter if I quit blogging and crept into my little bubble again. I would still be pretty much the same. I won't quit because it is good for me to get out in the world even if it is mostly virtual. It's fun to think about change.

I want to get better and stronger and faster, but all of that takes time and dedication. Sometimes other things get in the way of that. I get to hang out with my family and run, and I have loads of time to do fun things. That's what matters most, not some race I paid to run. I have to remind myself of this as work is making marathon training tricky. I work part time, and I am a contractor. Work is not guaranteed so I take what I can get, and I have to stay flexible. If I have to work for a 3 day weekend, which looks to be the case for several weekends in a row, then I have to do that while I can. There will be more marathons to come. Thanks to Jaymon, my husband, for reminding me of this. I may be able to swing it with doing long runs during the week instead of the weekends, but we shall see what unfolds.

I think I am contemplating the contradictions. I like high intensity and move towards that, but as I mature I want to move away from high intensity and the transition is strange sometimes. Many people think that, for instance, barefoot running is so

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“Where ever I am, I can run.”

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hard core. On the contrary, it's a mellow way to run. You run lightly and gently and most barefoot runners I know have gravitated to a more, light and gentle attitude about the rest of their lives as well. We don't like pain, hence the ditching of the shoes!

So mentioning shoes makes me think of stuff and gear for runners. In my little family of six, we don't really have a bunch of stuff and we don't buy things very often. We get many things second hand and don't spend money on cable TV and going to movies or going out to eat. We want time. Time together and time to just be mellow. If I want to do a bunch of activities then I have to pay for it. I then have to work at a job and spend my valuable time paying for these activities. To some people this is important and it is fun but for us, it's not worth the time right now.

This will change as Jaymon and I age, and our kids move on with their own lives. But for now with little ones, we try and live more minimally by choice. I didn't use to be like this by the way. Just like thinking I had to have gear, I also thought I needed to spend money to be happy. These are lessons that I have learned from my dear one and am thankful that I have always been drawn to

him for his differences from me. I have let them change me and I am happier for it.

Because I blog, companies offer me free stuff to try. It's kind of strange to get a bunch of free stuff from companies to try out. It's great for us since we live on a very minimal budget, and I have very much enjoyed the stuff I have been sent. It's a win-win for all really. I get free stuff, the company gets some exposure and you get a chance to try it out for free too. Bottom line though, it's just stuff. I like it, but I don't need it.

I constantly have to remind myself to turn down my emotional volume, mellow out, and remember what matters the most to me. Life can be overwhelming. We had big plans and all of them changed drastically when we had a son with autism. We have worked and spent thousands and thousands of dollars on trying to help him. We moved to a different state and put many of our own desires on hold for a while. It has made me a better person. It has made me evaluate what matters most. Most days I appreciate my limitations as they breed creativity and appreciation for what I have. I am able to do this in part because I run. It has been a long, hard road to get where I am today, and thanks to my lovely family of boys I am able to be safe and free to be who I am.

I get out there and burn off the pain, laugh, cry, and zone out. I push my kids in a stroller or run with my husband. I want to travel and run all over the country. Where ever I am, I can run. Every time I have set

out and put one foot in front of the other I have changed. Where I ran became a part of me.

At the end of the day I am a mother to four of the coolest little boy spawn I know and a wife to my best friend. I run barefoot because I love it. It started out so I could continue to run to become and stay injury free, and now that I know how great it is, even if there were shoes that would never cause injuries, I still would run barefoot.

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Angie Bishop is a gluten and casein-free wife and mother to four brilliant boys, one of whom has autism. She runs barefoot to stay sane and because it is so much fun. Through the struggle it makes her a better person. She ran her first barefoot mile on June 19th 2009 and hasn't looked back! Barefoot or bust!!

She has PRed in all of her race distances since going shoeless and her approach to shoes is the same as Christopher McDougall's when he said, “My approach to shoes is the same as my approach to clothes. Apply as necessary.” You can follow Angie's blog at: www.barefootangiebee.com.



Sports Nutrition

Exercise is part of a healthy lifestyle. Whether your goal is health maintenance or training for an endurance event, fueling properly is key. It's also important to recognize the difference between the two. Eating to fuel a daily power walk is different than eating to fuel a long distance run or triathlon. Factors to consider include the right balance of carbohydrates, protein, and fat, the right amount of vitamins and minerals, as well as the proper amount of fluids. Here are some tips for endurance training readers.

Carbohydrates:

- Best fuel for working muscles
- It's important to include carbs at all meals.
- Carbohydrates for energy, fuel our muscles. It's important to make our carb choices count by focusing on whole grains and produce.
- A serving of fruit or veggies is about the size of a baseball.
- A serving of whole grains is about the size of our fist (1 cup). A 1-cup serving of grains averages about 175-200 calories.

Protein

- We need protein for muscle growth and for recovery (to repair muscle damage after exercise).
- Protein is needed to make red blood cells, which moves oxygen to muscles, and white blood cells, which help fight infection.
- Our body uses protein to make hormones and enzymes, which helps regulate our metabolism.
- Our maximum protein needs are only about 1 gram per pound of body weight. This can easily be met with "real" food.
- Three ounces of lean meat provides about 21 grams of protein. Three ounces is about the size of a deck of cards.
- A good rule is to eat a portion of lean protein the size of the palm of your hand (at least 3 ounces) for lunch and dinner (breakfast if possible).

Fat:

- We need fat for energy.
- Fat helps our body utilize some vitamins.
- Fat helps move substances in and out of cells, and it helps keep your brain and nervous system healthy.
- Fat provides a "satisfaction" factor at each meal.
- Try to include a serving of healthy fats with your meal. A serving is a tablespoon (about the size of your thumb).
- Healthy fats include: almonds, mixed nuts, peanuts, peanut butter, ground flax meal, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, avocados, canola oil, and olive oil.

Vitamins & Minerals:

- Help unlock the energy stored in food so your body can use it as fuel.
- Our body needs calcium, magnesium, fluoride, and vitamin D to keep bones strong.
- Include a serving of veggies (1 cup) at lunch and dinner... preferably dark leafy greens.
- Include a serving of fruit (1/2 cup) at breakfast and lunch.
- Make sure your veggies are not fried or swimming in butter.
- Take a daily multivitamin. This is a great insurance plan to ensure our bodies are getting the nutrients needed.

Fluids:

- Water is the most important nutrient. If your body weight drops just 1% from losing fluids, your performance will suffer.
- Be sure to replace the fluids you lose through sweat when you are active.
- For high intensity or endurance workouts (90 minutes or longer) it is extremely important to replace your fluids.
- Weigh yourself prior to your workout.
- Hydrate during your workout as usual.
- Weigh yourself after your workout – make note of the number of pounds lost post workout. Consume 3 cups (24 ounces) of water or sports drink for every pound of body weight that you lost while you were active.

“If your body weight drops just 1% from losing fluids, your performance will suffer.”

Sports Drinks:

Sports drinks such as Gatorade and Power-Ade are really only needed when you will be working out for 90 minutes or more. For daily exercise up to 1-hour, water is the best choice for hydration. My favorite way to rehydrate after a long run is with coconut water. It's light, refreshing, and contains the key electrolytes, potassium (more than a banana), magnesium, sodium, and calcium.



Peanut Butter Banana Oats

Always Eat Breakfast

Make it a point to eat a good breakfast every morning. This is extremely important for endurance athletes. The level of glycogen in our liver is lower in the morning. We need to refuel our body to replace the energy it used while we slept.

Before an Endurance Workout

3-4 hours before a workout, practice, or competition, eat a carb loaded meal such as rice, pasta, yogurt, fruit smoothie, fruit, breads, rolls, etc...

Eat Often

It's extremely important to NEVER let yourself go hungry. If you're training for a marathon or an Iron Man, your calorie

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“If your workouts will be no longer than one hour, it’s not vital to eat something prior to your workout...unless you are STARVING from the night before.”

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intake will be very high. I know when my husband is in peak training mode, he’s taking in between 4000 & 5000 calories per day. Plan your meals and time them around your workouts for proper digestion.

For Morning Exercisers

If your workouts will be no longer than one hour, it’s not vital to eat something prior to our workout... unless you are STARVING from the night before. If you will be going for a long run, cycling, or any other activity that will be 90 minutes or more, fueling prior to exercise is key. Have an energy bar, granola bar, ½ bagel, large banana, etc... Consume at least 12 ounces or more prior to your workout, and make sure you hydrated properly the day before.

Question of the day: How do you fuel your workouts? What pre-workout meal works best for you?

If I workout out super early, like 5 or 6am, I don’t really eat anything because I’m not hungry. I do eat a good breakfast within an hour of finishing my workout. I don’t do endurance training anymore, but if I decide to go for a longer run (8-10 miles for me) I’ll make sure to eat some type of easily digested food like a Balance Bar a couple of hours before my run.

Here is my favorite refueling breakfast after a long run:

Peanut Butter Banana Oats:

- ½ old fashioned oats
- 1 cup 2% or skim milk
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 banana
- 1 tablespoon all natural peanut butter

In a small pot, combine milk, salt, and oats. Bring to medium heat and continue to stir. As oats began to cook, thinly slice the banana and add slice by slice while stirring quickly. This will make oats very creamy. Once oats are cooked, pour into bowl and spoon 1-tablespoon peanut butter on top of oatmeal. The peanut butter will melt throughout the oats.

Resources: American Dietetic Association, Jon Vredenburg MBA,RD, CSSD

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Estela Schnelle is a Registered Dietitian & Nutritionist.

She is a mother and a runner. You can read her daily blog about nutrition, motherhood, food, and fitness at www.weeklybite.com.

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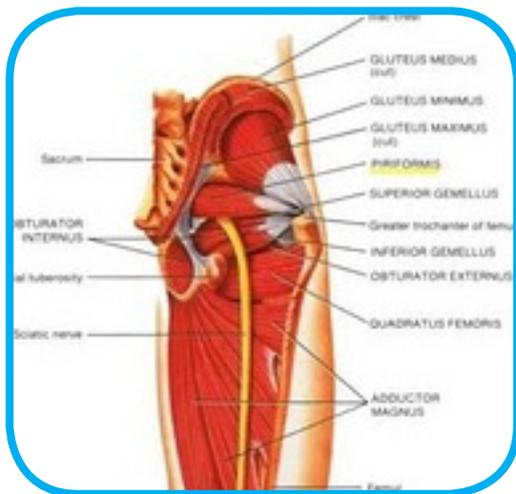


Embrace the Pigeon

With many of us in the nitty-gritty, high mileage weeks of our fall race training cycles, it is common to have a complaining body part or two...or six.

For me those parts are my left hamstring and piriformis, or as I like to call it, buttular region. These particular afflictions are not new to me; they first flared up during some overzealous speed work in last year's Boston training cycle. You can look at the treatment plan I followed that got me to Boston in one piece (with a little...ok a lot of K Tape on my blog. I aggravated them once again a few weeks ago when I tripped on a root (or did I?) on that trail during my 20 miler.

When the piriformis muscle gets aggravated and inflamed it presses on the sciatic nerve and causes pain in the butt and maybe into the lower back and down the leg as well.



Piriformis syndrome is frequently caused by:

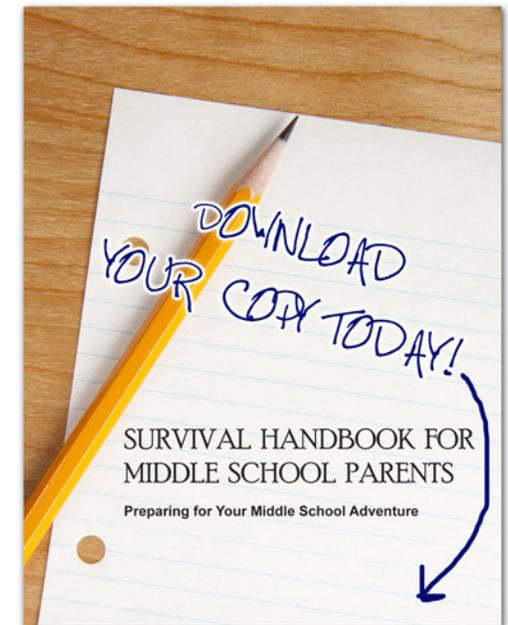
- Exercising on hard surfaces like concrete
- Exercising on uneven ground
- Increasing intensity and/or duration too quickly
- Ill-fitting or worn out shoes
- Sitting for long periods of time

Some of you have asked for tips on how I keep my ornery hammy/piriformis content. Here's how I deal.



Foam Roll

I do it before and after every run. It was hellish at first, but now it's easier.



www.middleschoolroadmap.com

Extended Warm-up

Especially if I'm doing speed work, instead of 10 minutes, I take at least 15 and even 20 minutes to be thoroughly warmed up.

Maintain Proper Form and Foot Turnover

I make sure I don't over stride as my hammy will surely complain.

Pigeon Pose is My Friend

I swear these two stretches are my secret weapons against IT and piriformis revolt. I do them both after every workout and will sit in double pigeon for as long as I can stand it.



Pigeon Pose

Start in plank then bring one leg in front of you, knee out and ease the other one back. Sit there like this and breathe. Feel the stretch in your IT band, hip and the opposite hip flexor.

To deepen the pose, bring your hands and body forward.

Double Pigeon Pose

This one really stretches the outer hips, especially the piriformis. It hurts (me at least) but it's awesome.

Put one bent leg out in front of you just like you did for pigeon. Then place the opposite ankle on top of the inner knee and let your knee drop out to the side. You can apply gentle pressure with your hand.



Since foam rolling and doing the pigeon poses religiously after running, knock wood, I have had no serious hamstring, IT, or piriformis issues. However, stretching is only a part of the equation. Strong, balanced hips (gluteal muscles) are also important. I am in the process of putting together a comprehensive hip strengthening plan. It's a work in progress!

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Marcia Kadens is a Chicago-area writer, runner, and mother of two feisty girls. She currently sports a matched set of black toenails and qualified to run her third Boston Marathon next spring. Visit her blog at www.tea-marcia-runningmouth.blogspot.com.



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“It’s elevating and humbling at the same time.
Running along a beach at sunrise
with no other footprints in the sand,
you realize the vastness of creation,
your own insignificant space in the plan,
how tiny you really are,
your own creatureliness
and how much you owe to the supreme body,
the God that brought
all this beauty and harmony into being.”

-Sister Marion Irvine, Olympic Marathon Trials qualifier

This Mother Can Run