

# The mechanics of running

“Learn to walk before you run.” This proverb wisely advises not rushing into things until the appropriate steps are taken towards the ultimate goal; prudent advice for exercisers keen on leaping into a running program right off the couch.

BY CHERILEE GAROFANO, BA, CPT, CNP, RNCP

**R**unning is an effective and efficient way to work out, yet its mechanics are complex and injury is common. Humans are born to run but if you start a running program in your 30's or 40's, you have decades of musculature imbalances to overcome.

## **Injury-free start-up**

**1** Build mileage slowly. Start with a 10:1 walk/run program: 10 minutes walking and one minute running to slowly build endurance, strength in joints and connective tissues. This can be repeated up to six times for a total of 60 minutes of exercise. Progress weekly by adding a minute of running time a week, or 10:2's, and then 10:3's the third week. Aiming for three sessions a week of this combination is ideal. If you are a runner, increase training 10% a week; if you are currently running 45 minutes once a week, add five minutes the following week. Only do one long run a week and keep your other two or three runs a shorter duration but be sure to combine hills and tempo work.

**2** Warm up to slowly build intensity. A fast walk/slow jog combination + dynamic (range of motion) stretches provide circulation to muscles and joints as well as ensuring proper joint lubrication.

**3** Walk/run mechanics: look straight in front of you, shoulders back and down, abdominals engaged; relax arms, hands in lightly cupped fists. When running,

don't over-stride (170-180 steps/minute); strike at middle or ball of foot – never the heel which acts as a brake.

**4** Orthotics may be necessary for certain issues such as fallen arches; this can be a band-aid, not addressing the root cause of muscle imbalance/injury. Get assessed by a chiropractor or osteopath and work with them to remedy the situation.

**5** Balance out hip and leg muscles through focused strength training and regular, daily stretching.

Walking and running are fun, portable workouts that can be solitary bliss or socially dynamic. Both provide widespread health benefits such as increased cardiovascular fitness and weight loss. They also have a positive effect on lowering blood sugar levels, a powerful tool in the maintenance of type 2 diabetes.



### 1 Glute bridge with inner thigh squeeze

strengthens hamstrings, glutes and lower back. Lying on back with knees bent and together, feet on floor, lift hips high while squeezing glutes on the way up. Do 2 sets of 12 repetitions.

2



### 2 Clam shell

strengthens gluteus medius, an important hip stabilizer muscle. Lie on side with knees bent, thighs in line with body. Lift top leg open keeping feet together and using outer hip. Keep hips stacked. Do 2 sets of 8-10 repetitions.

3



### 3 Lateral band walks

are the next step after the Clam. Wrap theraband around ankles and walk to one side for 10 repetitions and then back. Keep tension on the band and toes straight.



**4 IT Band foam roller** for myofascial release of illiotibial band (the tendon running down the outer thigh), a cause of knee pain. Support body weight with hands in front; position outer thigh on top of roller; roll from the top of thigh towards knee. Note: the more painful, the more you need it! Progress slowly, working up to a few minutes each leg every day.



**5 Powerful pose squat** strengthens glutes and quads. Stand with feet together, arms outstretched and push hips back as if sitting in chair. Hold for up to 30 seconds.

## Make back to school fun and safe



**While your child is very excited about school starting again, remind her to stay safe and healthy.**

- a. If biking to school, take the route with her and remind her to always wear a helmet.
- b. Ensure your child wears appropriate footwear to avoid falls and foot injuries on the school playground.
- c. Remind her to wash her hands frequently and sneeze or cough only into her elbow.

While prevention is key to injury prevention, prompt and adequate first aid in case of an injury is important too. Come take a **Red Cross Child Care First Aid Course**. Be prepared for the unexpected!



6



**6 Glute medius kickbacks** strengthens abductors/glute medius. Stand with thera band around ankles, holding on to wall. Kick one leg back at 45 degree angle and hold for 1 second. Perform 2 sets of 10 repetitions both legs. **H&L** Cherilee runs Fuze Fit in Toronto offering sports specific group fitness strengthening and conditioning classes. [envisionwellness.ca](http://envisionwellness.ca)

Everything I do,  
I do with my  
Emergen-C®



MEGHANN

1000 milligrams of immune-supporting vitamin C. Energizing B vitamins & electrolytes. And a fizzy, fruity taste.

Visit [Vitasorb.com](http://Vitasorb.com) for more info.



**Emergen-C**  
FEEL THE GOOD™

Visit [vitasorb.com](http://vitasorb.com)  
for a free sample today  
1.888.557.5559

Limit one sample per email and household.  
Visit [vitasorb.com](http://vitasorb.com) for details. © 2010, Alacer Corp.