

Getting to the starting line for Race Series and Dublin Marathon

What you need to know before you start a training programme!!!

Running has become a very popular activity over the last few years. Each year, thousands of men and women decide to participate and set themselves the goal of walking, jogging or running races that are organised throughout the country. Whether it's from couch to 5k, improving fitness or setting oneself to achieve a goal like running a marathon; it is a great step towards leading to a fitter and healthier life.

However, as you mentally prepare to embark on a new exercise regime it is equally important that you ensure your body is ready and able to meet the demands that are about to be placed on it. Each level of training requires gradual steady increment of training- as a baby; you can't run before you walk!!! That's why I heartily recommend making an appointment with your GP before you start any new exercise programme, no matter what your fitness level is. Even the fittest people can have under-lying conditions they are either unaware of or choose to ignore.

Symptoms that can seem relatively benign but can indicate a bigger problem can include:

- Recurrent dizziness or fainting when you exercise.
- Discomfort or pain in your chest, jaw, neck or arms during any physical activities
- Shortness of breath
- Lower leg pain during walking, which goes away with rest
- Ankle swelling, especially at night

Like-wise a check-up with your GP is particularly important if you have any of the following conditions or illnesses:

- Heart disease
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Asthma or any lung disease
- Pregnancy
- Old and recurrent musculoskeletal injuries

Looking after your general health is just as important as getting fit and your GP is best placed to ensure everything is in working order as well as advising you on the best level of exercise for your own health needs.