**Marathon running injuries and illness presenting to the medical tent**

Marathon running is challenging and rewarding and over the last decade the popularity of running marathons has increased significantly. However, for many runners their performance and ability to finish the race is compromised by injury or illness. While marathon running is far from damaging, it should be respected for both psychological and physiological stress inflicted over the 26.2 miles (42.16km). Running a five-minute per mile marathon requires a 15- fold increase in energy production for over two hours, therefore such extended energy demands require the cardiorespiratory, endocrine, and neuromuscular systems to operate an elevated level for an inordinate length of time.

Started in 1980, the first race of Dublin Marathon had a total of 1420 finishers from an entry of 2100 runners. The ladies were lead home by Carey May who ran a world class 2:42:11; she was the first of the 40 lady finishers in the inaugural event. 37 years later the event grew with maximum runners registered cap at 20000 participants.

The extent of the sport injury problem calls for a preventative action based on the results of the epidemiological research. Therefore it is important to identify and describe the extent of the sports injury problem before a preventative measures can be introduced. Even though there have been multiple studies available, despite how much effort has been put into training runners are still getting injured during the event. However it is clear that more experiences runners are less prone to injury. The below analyses was conducted in the SSE Airtricity Dublin Marathon 2014.

72 runners were seen with the ratio of M: F (3:1) with mean age of 38 years of age. We also noted average weekly training load for these runners was 36 miles. 89% of runners treated the medical tent finished the race; of those 65% were brought in and 35% were self referred. Mechanism of injuries are classified into contact (collision with objects or with other runners) representing 10% and 90% non-contact (fall, slip or trip). The body parts injured were 40% both for the legs and body, 3% on the head and 7% involving the trunk. Nature of injuries with mostly related to dehydration followed by muscular strains, cramps, dizziness and nausea. From the data gathered, the ranges of illness presented to the medical unit are risk factors dependent such as weather, runner’s fitness levels, the course layout, runners' medical history and more.

Common medical problems/ injuries associated with either training or running at the marathon and the cause are important for every runner to be made aware of.

My next articles will be on describing these injuries and advice how to overcome these problems.