

April 2015

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Wellness

Miami-Dade County

PROVIDING EMPLOYEES WITH THE LATEST FITNESS AND WELLNESS NEWS, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

DOWNTOWN RUNNING CLUB

Want to get fit while having fun in a social environment...for FREE?

Join the Downtown Running Club! The group meets outside of the Employee Wellness Center at 12:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Participants are encouraged to join the group to start or continue training for the race. No matter your fitness level - walker, jogger or runner - you can feel free to join in on these fun runs twice a week for a great workout.

If you're registered for the Mercedes-Benz Corporate Run, this would be a great way to get some runs in prior to the race. Feel free to join the group on Tuesdays and Thursday to help you train for a better time.

If you are interested or have questions please contact the Employee Wellness Center at 305-375-5797 or employeewellnesscenter@miamidade.gov. *This is NOT a Miami-Dade County sponsored event.

****SAVE THE DATE – 2015 Spring into Wellness Fair!****

The 2015 Spring into Wellness Fair is taking place on Friday, April 10 from 9:00am to 2:00pm. It falls on Take Your Child to Work Day so feel free to bring your children so that they can enjoy all of the fun, kid-friendly activities. In addition you can enjoy food trucks, a farmer's market, exercise demonstrations, giveaways and much more. AvMed will also be providing County employees with free chair massages, health education literature, and health screenings that will include: blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, bone density and more. Don't miss out on this fun event – mark it in your calendar!



Why Runners Need Strength Training

There are two types of runners: those who just run and those who are well-balanced athletes.

Those in the latter group cross-train and perform strength training. They're usually stronger, healthier, and more successful athletes who are able to keep reaching new levels of performance. On the other hand, the runners who just run tend to get injured often and wonder why they aren't able to make much progress over the long term.

Strength work can be the perfect complement to a runner's training plan and is considered to be ideal cross training. One of the primary benefits is that it's a superb tool for injury prevention. Given that runners tend to experience alarmingly high injury rates, it is perhaps the most useful cross training method for them. The stronger you get, the more resilient your body will become to the demands of running. The repetitive impact of running won't wear you down as much. Plus, when you've got a strong body, any preexisting conditions will be less likely to worsen. This is because strength training helps to improve structural weaknesses in your body, whether in the muscles, joints, or connective tissues. Often, this will eliminate the source of many common running injuries. Strength training also builds core strength, which is particularly important for distance runners. A strong core will not only look great, it'll also help contribute to better posture throughout the day and while running. This means you'll be a more efficient runner. Finally, strength training will help you run faster. By improving your efficiency, allowing you to impart more force into the ground, and train healthy for longer periods of time, you'll finish races faster than ever before.

So whether you simply want to run pain-free or you want to shave some time off your favorite distance, strength training will help. Plus, you'll enjoy many of the other benefits that come with strength training, such as higher energy levels, increased bone density, a stronger metabolism, and less body fat.

How to Get Started:

Focus on compound exercises that work multiple muscle groups, such as squats, deadlifts, bench press, and overhead press. If you have access to a pull up bar, then pull ups, chin ups, and hanging knee or leg raises are great choices, too. You can also do all sorts of bodyweight exercises, which are superb options for runners for many reasons. You can do planks, side planks, bird dogs, glute bridges, mountain climbers, push ups, bodyweight squats, and lunges.

To start, pick four to six exercises from the suggestions above and perform one to three sets of each one based on your ability. Don't worry about adhering to a specific format of sets and reps. What matters most is that you work hard, perform a variety of exercises that target all the major muscle groups, and progress from week to week by making the workouts longer or adding weight. One or two ten- or twenty-minute sessions per week will be more than enough for most beginners. As you progress, you can increase the duration and frequency of your sessions to make them more challenging.

When you get a little more comfortable with the exercises, you can begin to put them into a more formal workout. Here are a couple of examples:

Sample Gym Workout for Runners

1. Barbell back squats - 1-2 sets
2. Barbell deadlifts - 1-2 sets
3. Overhead dumbbell press - 1-2 sets
4. Pull ups, chin ups, or dumbbell rows - 1-2 sets
5. Front plank - 1 max duration hold
6. Side planks - 1 max duration hold per side

Notes: Select weights that you can lift for about 4-6 reps, and stop each set either 1-2 reps before you reach muscle failure or if your form breaks down. Rest for 2-3 minutes between sets.

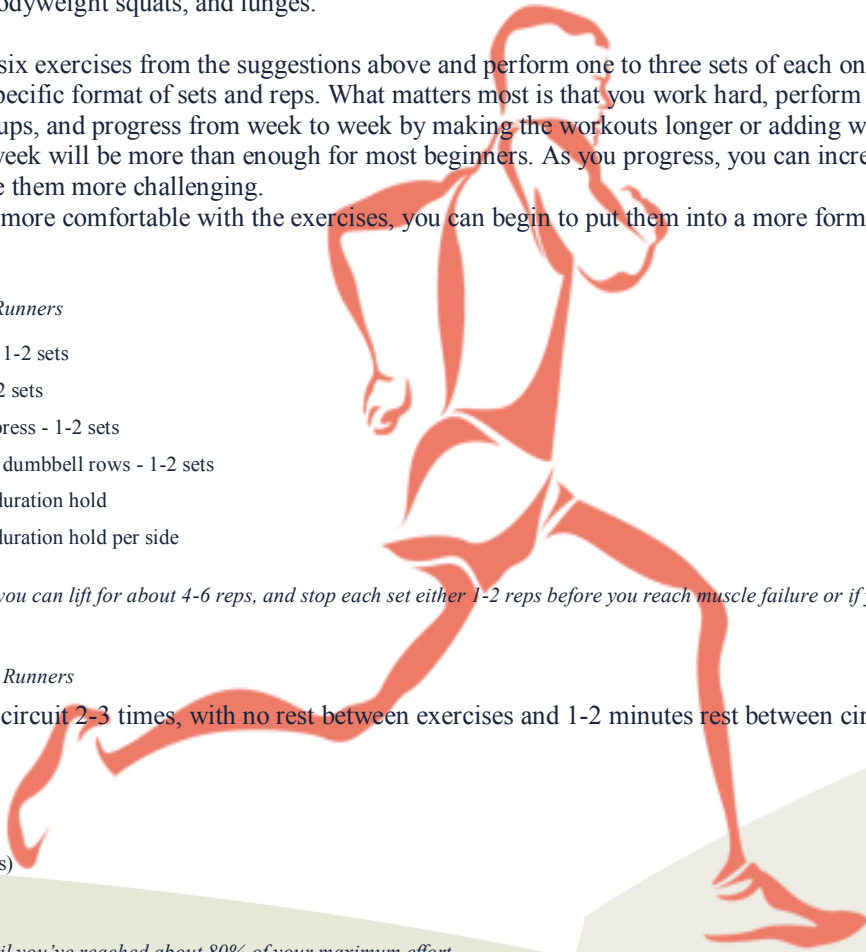
Sample Home Workout for Runners

Repeat the following circuit 2-3 times, with no rest between exercises and 1-2 minutes rest between circuits:

1. Bodyweight Squats
2. Push ups
3. Walking lunges
4. Side plank (both sides)
5. Glute bridges

Notes: Perform all sets until you've reached about 80% of your maximum effort.

Remember not to overwhelm yourself during the first few weeks. It's fine to ease into strength training slowly if you haven't been doing it regularly before. **See how your body responds.**



Should You Work Out When You're Sick?

At this time of year, one of the most frequently asked questions in and around fitness is, "Should I workout when I am sick?"

Like many topics in fitness, there isn't a clear-cut, scientific answer to working out while being sick. Conventional wisdom suggests that if you're only sort of sick (for example, a cold), it does no harm to work out and if it feels good, then why not. Conversely, the opposite is considered to be true - if you're really sick (for instance, the flu), you should probably not work out as you could be doing more harm than good. According to Thomas Weidner, head of athletic training at Ball State University, you should perform what's called a *neck check*. That is, when determining whether or not to exercise, if your symptoms are above the neck - sneezing, sore throat, and runny nose - then it's probably okay to work out.

Of course there are benefits to working out in general as it relates to our health. Specifically, exercise is a scientifically proven immunity booster. Exercising regularly may help you avoid getting sick in the first place. In a study at the University of South Carolina, adults who exercised regularly and moderately caught twenty percent fewer upper respiratory tract infections. That said, while exercising moderately can boost immunity, the opposite is also true. Intense and vigorous exercise can increase your susceptibility to being sick. While all of this is well and good, it's not necessarily news. It's common sense that we should exercise for boosting our immunity when we're not sick and that we should rest to boost our immunity when we are sick.

A more valid question might be, "I'm sick. why is my body not in balance and what can I learn from being sick?"

Many experts concur that the ultimate cause of sickness is stress. While there are many ways to alleviate and manage stress (exercise being a key one), there are few ways to actually solve it. However, if stress is the root of what ails us, then why not take being sick as an opportunity to tackle stress head on versus avoiding or masking it? Exercising while being sick potentially does just that- masks the fact that you really don't feel well. When it comes to the final word on being sick and whether you should exercise, it comes down to three words - rest, reflect, and recover. Do that.



Active Events: April

2015 CABA 5K Lawyers On The Run

Saturday, April 4 @ 7:30am

Tropical Park, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)

down2earth 5K-10k Run

Sunday, April 12 @ 7:00am

Zoo Miami, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)



Swim Miami 2015

Sunday, April 19 @ 7:00am

Miami Yacht Club, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)

BUBBLE PALOOZA Miami

Saturday, April 18 @ 10:00am

MDC Fairgrounds, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)

Run Fur Fun 5K

Sunday, April 26 @ 4:00pm

Killian Green Golf Club, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)

Are you acquainted with the County's Worksite Wellness Program "WW" events and activities? The Program is endorsed by Mayor *Carlos A. Gimenez*' Office under delegated authority to Deputy Mayor *Russell Benford*. The WW Program is coordinated through *Dennys E. Gonzalez*, from the Internal Services Department, who channels information to every County department through designated *Wellness Liaisons*. To find out who your department liaison is please visit [this link](#). Under its tagline "**Wellness Works**" and the blue "**W**" identifier the County's WW Program aims to engage employees on the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through educational activities, "health & wellness fairs" and ad-hoc department-level initiatives. Our goal is to join forces with existing employee-benefit resources and in-kind services from several County departments to bring information, resources and opportunities to all Miami-Dade County Employees and to lead a healthy lifestyle that promotes responsible individual choices. For related events and WW information visit <http://www.miamidade.gov/mayor/wellness.asp>. Feel free to contact wellnessworks@miamidade.gov for more information.