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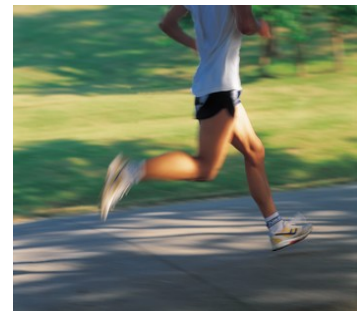
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## Top Tips for Marathon Runners

Congratulations on making it this far in your training for The Clonakilty Marathon! Whether you are doing the mini, half or full marathon, the final three weeks before race day are the most important in any training program. After weeks of preparation this is when caring for your body counts most. It is important to remember the final weeks don't mean cramming as much in as possible but continuing your usual training pace. Here are some tips to help you in those crucial last weeks...

- 1) Be Confident** - Ah yes, all the hard work taken care of and now all that's left to be done is cruise to the start line (and then run 26.2 miles!). With just a couple weeks to go, you should now be tapering your training so that there are no more long runs, but short runs at race pace. Be confident in the training that you have performed to date and enjoy the anticipation of the race. Remember, you are doing this for fun and it will be a major achievement no matter what your finishing time. Enjoy it!
- 2) Nutrition & Hydration** - Feed your muscles by increasing your carbohydrate and protein intake to help replace the glycogen your body loses while training. During your semi-long and long runs practice your hydration routine for marathon day. Hydrate with the same fluids you intend on the day and find out how often the marathon will have aid stations along the way. Keep hydrated by drinking between 400-800ml of water or hydration fluids per hour during exercises and be sure to replace lost fluids over the following 24 hours as dehydration will lead to fatigue.
- 3) R.I.C.E** - You have probably used this throughout your training routine to date but this is still an important protocol that will help alleviate initial pain and aid the recovery of an injury sustained while training or after the race. While resting the injury to prevent further damage, ice should be applied, ensuring to remove before the point of numbness or for a maximum of 20 minutes. A bandage should be applied to reduce swelling and the injury should be elevated above waist height, for at least as long as you are icing it.
- 4) Footwear & Clothing** - It is worth investing in the correct footwear and clothing for the marathon as they will have a direct impact on your performance. Comfortable clothing is essential. The shoes should be relatively lightweight but provide good support. Sports Orthotics (insoles) are useful to prevent common injuries to runners. One of our Chartered Physiotherapists can complete a biomechanical assessment to determine if insoles are necessary for you. Wear your shoes on a run at least once before the test if you get sore feet or blisters. Keep a couple of blister bandages in your pocket in case one starts to develop. If you feel any friction on your feet, stop immediately and apply



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before it has a chance to become a major problem. New clothing should be washed and worn at least once before use to prevent skin irritation and apply Vaseline over any body part that will be repeatedly rubbing against your clothing, especially over nipples.

- 5) **Mimic the course** – The Clonakilty Marathon is a varied course so it is a good idea, where possible, to start doing runs on the same topography as the marathon to get a good sense of your fitness. For example, go up and down lots of hills so you will be using a similar variation of muscles that you will use throughout the marathon course.



- 6) **Relax** – As it comes closer to race day, a deep tissue sports massage can be very beneficial to repair any soft tissue micro-trauma sustained in the run up to the race. If you feel tightness or discomfort in the weeks leading up to race day, treat yourself to expert massage and your body will thank you from mile 20 onwards! Within a week of race day, you should taper your training and keep your runs easy. Treat it as though you are storing up energy, which will help you keep mentally and physically fit.  
**For €10 discount on sports and deep tissue massage for all Clonakilty Marathon runners visit [www.thephysiocompany.com](http://www.thephysiocompany.com) and quote voucher no. CLONPHYSIO10**

- 7) **Stick to the plan** – This is not the week to try anything new in your training plan. If there are elements of the training that you haven't done before or that you have done in a different way, that's fine, just stick with what you know and continue at your pace. Once you are comfortable with this, ignore what you haven't done.
- 8) **Warm up** – On race day, ensure you complete a thorough warm up before starting the race. Spend no more than 10-15 minutes jogging to warm up all muscles in the body. If you will be running the marathon at your training pace, just walk around a bit in the half hour before the start of the race.
- 9) **Stretching** – Remember this is the one exercise that is just as important before, during and after the race. It will help reduce the occurrence of injury, increase flexibility and the range of motion in your joints. After a short warm-up with some light activity, spend time stretching. Post-Marathon you should continue gentle stretching and exercising to reduce muscle soreness and stiffness.
- 10) **You've Made It!** First things first, after crossing the finish line, ensure you change out of your marathon clothes, bring a bag with a spare set of warm clothes to put on in order to keep your body warm and relaxed. Chances are the race has taken its toll and your muscles and joints are sore and stiff. Do a proper warm down for around 15 minutes which will include stretching of all the major muscle groups and if needed get a hot drink to prevent hypothermia. Using the R.I.C.E protocol will ease initial discomfort and a Chartered Physiotherapy can assess any further injuries sustained from the race. A deep tissue sports massage between 1 and 3 days will help you recover quickly.

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Keep up the good work, see you at the next race!

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