

Walk before you run....

The beauty of running is that it is so straightforward, flexible and positive. Any healthy person can run. You may not run fast, and you may not run far. But you can do it. Even if you have to mix walking with running, you'll lose weight, lower your blood pressure, reduce the stress of daily life, and feel a rush of energy. With the Gold's Gym 5k road race coming up on Saturday, May 9...get started with your training today!

If you are just beginning, here are some tips to get started...
In 10 weeks you will be able to run 3.5 miles without stopping!
Before you begin this schedule, get your legs ready with 8 days of walking: Walk for 20 minutes a day for the first 4 days, then increase to 30 minutes a day for 4 more days. Now you are ready to begin with week 1.

Each week of the program, do your run/walk workouts on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Take a rest day or an easy walk on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday.

- Week 1 Run 2 minutes, walk 4 minutes. Complete 5 cycles.
- Week 2 Run 3 minutes, walk 3 minutes. Complete 5 cycles.
- Week 3 Run 5 minutes, walk 2.5 minutes. Complete 4 cycles.
- Week 4 Run 7 minutes, walk 3 minutes. Complete 3 cycles.
- Week 5 Run 8 minutes, walk 2 minutes. Complete 3 cycles.
- Week 6 Run 8 minutes, walk 2 minutes. Complete 2 cycles, and then run 8 minutes.
- Week 7 Run 9 minutes, walk 1 minute. Complete 3 cycles.
- Week 8 Run 13 minutes, walk 2 minutes. Complete 2 cycles.
- Week 9 Run 14 minutes, walk 1 minute. Complete 2 cycles. Note: after completing week 9, if you still feel tired, repeat this week of training before moving on to week 10.
- Week 10 Run 30 minutes.

Before you run out the door...A standard precaution is that anyone over the age of 35 should have a stress test and a full medical examination before running. Request an electrocardiogram recorded before, during and after exercise. Those under 35 who have risk factors for heart disease should also be tested.

Use common sense and be careful. You don't have to be in perfect shape to start running, however, get your doctor's go-ahead if you have any doubts about your health.