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There are so many reasons to start running. Whether you want to lose weight or you just love the feeling of letting your legs take you somewhere new, running can be a great way to improve your health and unwind. Once you start running regularly, youâ€™ll notice that you sleep better and you have more energy. Did you know that people who run regularly are actually happier on average than those who donâ€™t participate in regular physical activity? Thatâ€™s because exercise promotes positive hormones in your body that make you happier and more productive throughout the day. To harness that natural strength and energy, all you need to do is get started. Your first step should be setting a goal.

Are you planning for a particular race, or do you just have general fitness goals? Do you want to be able to run a mile without stopping? If you have been a runner in the past, you may have a personal best that you want to beat. Whatever the goal, it is important to have one before you start, because your goal will drive your running program. Everything you do will be in an effort to meet and exceed that goal. A common stumbling block for many runners, whether they are experienced or new to the sport, is taking on too much too soon. When you push your body too hard before it is ready, you can injure yourself, maybe even permanently. The conventional wisdom touted by many â€œexperiencedâ€• runners is that you should work through the pain, but be careful when following that advice. If you have injured yourself, running through it may cause more damage.

Proper stretching, warm-ups, and cool downs are essential to a healthy running program. You wonâ€™t be doing yourself any good if you injure yourself. Keep in mind that as you progress through your running program, your body will adjust and adapt to what you are doing. This is why it is a good idea to up the ante every week, pushing your body a little harder and a little further. You wonâ€™t make any progress if you keep doing the same thing week after week. If running every day doesnâ€™t appeal to you, you may want to take a cross-training approach. Many runners enjoy weight lifting, cycling, or swimming on their off-days. In this way, you can keep yourself entertained and motivated through the week, while staying active no matter what day it is.

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TarahMeyer Martin - About Author:
Tarah Meyer-Martin is a runner who writes about running and training.For more details on a Run Training and a Start Running than please visit our website.

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