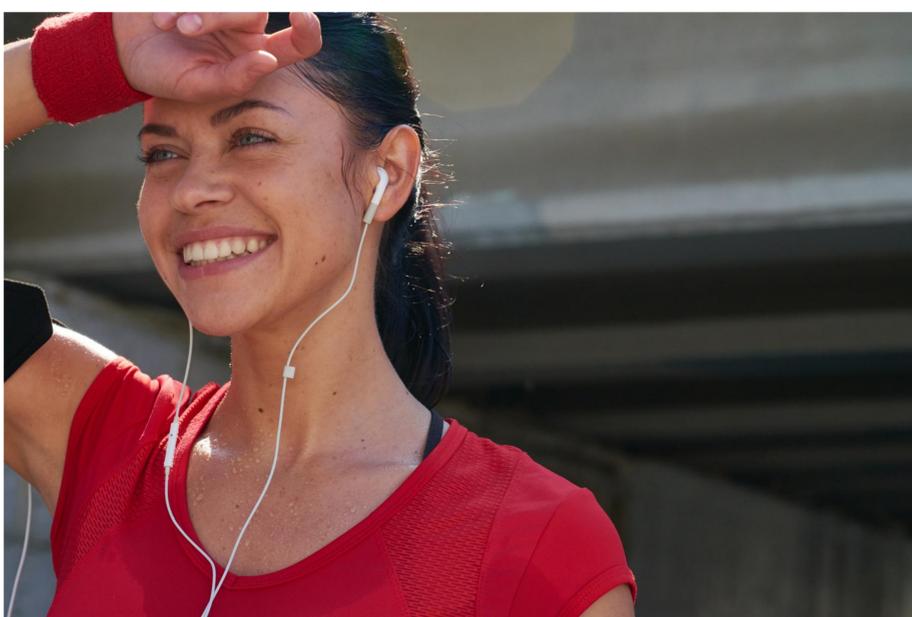


Safety Tips for Running in the Heat

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Summertime is right around the corner and that means long days that boast hot, humid, and rainy conditions. For most people, the change is welcome, for some it's an inconvenience, and for some it can be a real danger. For runners though, it can be a mixed blessing.

Fortunately, AdventHealth is here to help you learn how to stay safe and make the most out of this Summer if you're a runner. Here are a few tips from our experts to help you feel whole when you lace up your sneakers.

Hydration

The most important thing to remember during hot summer months is to stay hydrated. Runners should always drink a glass of water before running and bring water with them to drink as they go.

CamelBaks or similar products are great but a bottle of water works just as well.

With temperatures easily reaching the high 80's even in the morning and with humidity as high as 100 percent, the risk of dehydration and heat exhaustion is very real. High humidity is dangerous because you don't sweat as much as you normally would when it's humid, and the body relies on sweating for cooling down your body.

Time of Day

Schedule your runs in the morning or evening hours when temperatures are generally lower than the blazing afternoon heat. If your schedule doesn't allow for it and you find yourself having to run in the afternoon sun, you should find a path with shade, make sure you're wearing at least an SPF 15 or higher sunscreen, and take regular walking breaks to rehydrate and cool down.

Sports drinks or waters enhanced with electrolytes are also recommended. If you don't want to cut down on your sugar intake, try mixing a bottle with half sports drink and half water. That way you still get some of the energy and the electrolytes but with fewer unwanted calories.

Scale Back Intensity

Training in the summer should be less about your pace or times and more about how you feel doing it. Running in high humidity slows runner's times dramatically and can be very discouraging and frustrating. Don't let it get to you. Even the most elite athletes experience this.

Stick with your fitness routine and come Fall, your times will be back where you expect them to be or even better for having trained in harsh conditions.

It can take somewhere between two weeks to a month to acclimate to the heat and humidity and everyone's different, so don't be too hard on yourself.

Use the Right Gear

Visit your local running store to find gear that's designed to keep you cool in high heat and humidity. In the summertime, look for well-ventilated shoes and clothing made from moisture wicking material to keep your skin cool and avoid blisters and chaffing.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

Sometimes an emergency situation can strike, even if you try your best to prevent it. If you experience the following symptoms you should immediately move to a cooler place, stop exercising, and cool down by pouring chilled water over your head, ears, neck and wrists or use wet cloths, compresses, and fanning. If symptoms persist, you may need to seek medical attention.

Watch for:

- Cool, moist skin
- Dark urine
- Dizziness, lightheadedness
- Headaches
- Nausea and vomiting
- Weakness

If symptoms worsen, seek medical attention immediately by calling 911 (or your local emergency number) right away. Worsening symptoms can include:

- Dry, hot, and red skin
- Extreme confusion
- Fever (temperature above 104 degrees)
- Irrational behavior
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness

For questions about running or starting a workout plan that's appropriate for you, [visit our website](#) or call [407-303-8080](tel:407-303-8080) to talk to one of our qualified physical therapists or exercise physiologists.

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