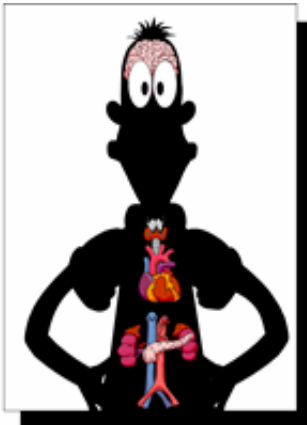


## A Marathon Effort!

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007, a Phoenix Team will line up to take part in the Cork City Marathon. The motivation, the training, the commitment and the smell of deep heat that has dominated our offices will culminate in a wonderful achievement for our team and the charities we are supporting. Exercising helps us to stay healthy, so there's no point in getting hurt doing it! Here are our Top Tips for safe exercising:

- Always use proper gear. Replace your athletic shoes as they wear out. Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes that let you move freely and are light enough to release your body heat. When you exercise in cold weather, dress in removable layers.
- Warm up to prepare your body to exercise, even before you stretch. Run in place for a few minutes, breathe slowly and deeply or gently rehearse the motions of the exercise to follow. Warming up increases your heart and blood flow rates and loosens up other muscles, tendons, ligaments and joints you'll use in exercise.
- Begin your stretches slowly and carefully until you reach a point of muscle tension. Hold each stretch for 10-20 seconds, and then slowly and carefully release it. Inhale before you stretch and exhale as you release. Do each stretch only once. Never stretch to the point of pain, always maintain control and never bounce on a muscle that's fully stretched.
- Take your time when you exercise. Move through the full range of motion with each repetition. Breathe regularly to help lower your blood pressure and increase blood supply to the brain.



- Drink enough water to prevent dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Drink one pint of water about 15 minutes before you start exercising and another pint after you cool down. Have a drink of water every 20 minutes or so while you exercise.
- Make cooling down the final phase of your exercise routine. It should take twice as long as your warm up. Slow your motions and lessen the intensity of your movements for at least 10 minutes before you stop completely. By the time you're done cooling down, your skin is dry and you've "cooled down."
- Schedule regular days off from exercise and rest

when you're tired. Fatigue, soreness and pain are good reasons to not exercise. Exercise puts repetitive stress on many parts of your body such as muscles, tendons, cartilage, bones and nerves. This leads to micro-traumas - - minor injuries that would heal with enough rest. When you exercise too frequently, your body never has a chance to repair these micro-traumas.

## Injury Risk factors

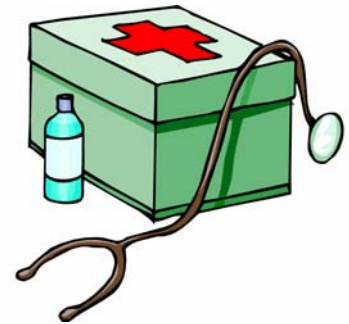
In general, you're more likely to be injured if:

- The duration, intensity or frequency of your exercise is excessive or rapidly increasing.
- The terrain or weather conditions are extreme or irregular.
- You use incorrect equipment including athletic shoes.
- You have been injured in the past.
- You smoke, drink or have led a sedentary lifestyle.
- You have low aerobic or muscle endurance, low or imbalanced strength or abnormal or imbalanced flexibility.
- You have high arches in your feet, bowed legs or legs of different lengths.

## First Aid

Sometimes accidents happen despite safe exercise precautions. If you pull a muscle (or worse) during exercise, apply a protective device such as a sling, splint or brace. Then use the first aid standard for musculoskeletal injuries, RICE:

- Rest the injury.
- Ice it to lessen swelling, bleeding and inflammation.
- Apply a compression bandage to limit swelling.
- Elevate the injury above heart level to reduce swelling.



*Note: ALWAYS consult your doctor before starting an exercise programme.*

