

# Tips for Running in Hot Weather

"Some like it hot. Baseball pitchers, surfers, and bathing beauties, are typically first in line. But long-distance runners, be they serious racers or fitness runners are usually less enthused," said Mark Will-Weber, former senior editor at *Runner's World Magazine*, cross-country and track coach at Moravian College, and author of two books on running.

"Although most runners are pleased when they can finally forgo their winter running gear for a pair of shorts and a singlet in those balmy days of spring, soaring summer temperatures bring on special problems. Rising mercury can make running uncomfortable and, at its most extreme, even potentially dangerous with the likes of heat stroke and severe dehydration." Will-Weber continued.

Here's some quick tips on how to handle the heat when it comes barreling in with all the sizzle of a Roger Clemens fastball.

## DRESS FOR THE TEST

Those cotton running t-shirts you get for entering a race are probably fine for the post-event picnic, but when temps rise (70 degrees and above) and humidity hovers (50 percent and up) then it's time to get it in gear-special summer running gear, that is. Think light weight and light in color. Micro-fiber wear (such as "CoolMax") with mesh is the way to roll. If you run in a singlet (a racing vest without shoulder covering), don't forget to lather on the sunscreen (preferably something above SPC 25).

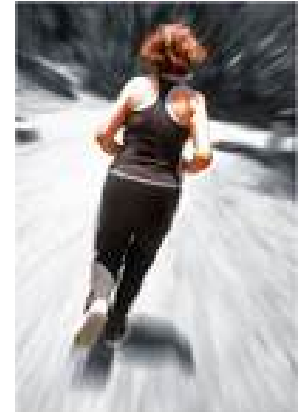
## THINK A LITTLE SHADY

Go for the shade--and go for the shades. A running route beneath a canopy towering maples and oaks is a better choice than a tree-less urban thoroughfare, choked with cars-and exhaust fumes. Trees (and grasses), however, can kick up your allergies. Because pollen packs more of a punch when it gets blown around (in your eyes and up nostrils), think about a pair of light-weight running shades.

Sunglasses help against pollen and protect against the sun at the same time. Allergy sufferers also do well to plan their workouts in late afternoon or early evenings, since pollen levels tend to be higher between dawn and mid-morning.

## BOTTOMS UP

Drink before you run, and drink during your run. Even a 30 minute jog on a warm July day might require 16 ounces of fluid. Don't trust your "thirst mechanism" to get you "on the level" in terms of fluid; by the time runners feel thirsty, it's usually too late. The body can't replenish fluids as rapidly as it sweats on those true "dog days."



Remember that some decongestants (such as allergy sufferers might take) can also contribute to dehydration; likewise for other popular beverages such as coffee and alcohol. (So save that mug of beer for several hours after your run!)

Sports drinks have a bonus of replenishing glucose (which will give your blood sugar a quick "boost") and salt, but pure cool water is still a great way to go. On race days, I sometimes like to try a "half and half"- half sports drink, half bottled water.

### **TURN THAT STUFF OFF!**

My father used to yell that up the stairs when I was booming the Rolling Stones on my stereo way back when. Turning it off is actually a good idea if you are out running; leave your portable music for the beach. Why? Because you really take away one of your most valuable "safety senses"- hearing - if you insist on "plugging in" while you're running. You might not hear that mountain biker yell "On your left!" when he comes screaming down the trail behind you-regardless if you're listening to "The Sex Pistols" or Mozart.

### **THE COMPETITIVE EDGE (Two Good Tips For Free)**

Beginning runners competing in races can sometimes get anxious when it comes to taking sports drink or water at the aid stations. Here's how to "handle it":

*First*, try to get a cup near the end of the aid station table; that way you'll avoid a lot of the "traffic" from other runners stopping at the same table. The trick is to avoid "rush hour."



*Second*, "pinch" the paper cup-don't try to grab it with an open palm because when you're fatigued from racing, you just might drop it. Instead, pinch the cup at the top-so that as you glance down at cup, you will see a "figure eight". Using this method will allow you to hang onto the cup and down its contents with greater ease because your "pinch" has helped you form an easy-to-drink-from funnel.

#### ***About the Author...***

Will Weber recently released his second book, *The Running Trivia Book: 1,001 Questions from the Sprints to the Marathons*. The book was published by Breakaway Books, the same company that published Will-Weber's first book, *The Quotable Runner*.

#### **References**

Weber, Will. (2011). Tips for running in hot weather. Retrieved June 10, 2011 from <http://www.chiff.com/a/exercise-heat.html>