

Q+A



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FITNESS TRAINER

HOW CAN I PREVENT GETTING SORE KNEES WHILE TRAINING FOR MY UPCOMING MARATHON?

— COURTNEY, VIA EMAIL

DEAR COURTNEY:

It is important to plan a progressive training program that is appropriate for your current fitness level and health history that also takes into account adequate rest at least three months before the race. The weekend warrior athlete will be more susceptible to injuries due to inadequate training. Sore knees can be a sign of overtraining, which includes poor nutrition, lack of recovery and lack of sleep. Never ignore pain however, so it is best to get it cleared by a medical professional.

To prevent overtraining, increase your distance and intensity gradually every week and balance training with adequate recovery. Schedule a day of rest once per week and reduce your training intensity by 30 to 50 per cent for one week every month. Alternating intense and light training every other day will also provide better results. It's also a good idea to cross train (i.e. swimming, weight training, yoga/stretching, etc.) to alleviate the muscles used in running, while maintaining your fitness level.

Knee problems still persisting? A physiotherapist can help create a program to strengthen the surrounding muscles.



Give your workout a jolt

Further evidence that caffeine can enhance more than just your ability to pull an all-nighter: taking this energy-boosting supplement prior to strenuous aerobic exercise can improve performance and spur fat burn, says a study published in the *Journal of Exercise Science & Fitness*. The downside? The participants were males who didn't regularly use caffeine, so more research is needed to determine the effects for females and those who have a java habit.



WH&F'S READER WORKOUT OF THE MONTH:



Judith Gelmen, 51, has an illustrious 23-year career with the FBI as a special agent and recruiter. She needs to stay in tip-top shape to keep up with her job's demands – and this circuit's one of her tried-and-tested faves.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Proper shoes and a positive attitude!

HOW TO: Judith heads to Santa Monica twice per week to utilize a set of 125 steps that goes from the beach to an overhead bluff. (If you don't have stairs available, do walking lunges instead.) Do the following circuit four times (or less, depending on your current fitness level) for a total distance of about four miles.

- 1. Jog** at a moderate pace for half a mile.
- 2. Sprint** for 100 yards.
- 3. Ascend** approximately 125 steps at a moderate pace (or replace with 50 to 75 walking lunges).
- 4. Perform 20 push-ups** on your toes. If you find standard push-ups difficult, do as many as you can before bringing your knees to the floor.
- 5. Do 50 sit-ups.**

REPEAT THE CIRCUIT UP TO THREE TIMES.

53 Percentage of studies in a multi-university review that found that exercise can protect against breast cancer.