

# TIPS FOR A SAFE MARATHON

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1. Know how to hydrate correctly. Too little hydration can lead to dehydration. Too much hydration can put you at risk for hyponatremia – a condition where drinking too much liquid dilutes the salt in your bloodstream; it can be life-threatening. Hyponatremia can occur in longer races, mostly in slower runners who drink so much water that they do not lose weight or actually gain weight. This excess water causes puffiness, headache, nausea and vomiting, seizure, and can result in death. Although this medical condition has a low frequency, cases have been reported at many marathons. If you notice any of the above problems, or if you have gained weight during the race or you feel like you are getting ill, you should be evaluated by a physician.
2. Be prepared for the weather. Wear sunscreen if it's a bright sunny day. Wear appropriate gear if rain is expected or if it is cold on race day.
3. Listen to your body when running in the race. Run a smart and safe race by realizing that marathons can be a bit of agony and ecstasy. A consistent muscle spasm or pain may need to be checked by one of the physical therapists at the first aid stations.
4. List any of your medications on the reverse side of your bib number. If you have prior medical history, list that as well. This will help the physicians on the course know more about your health in an emergency.
5. Know the course. Travel the course and study it, if you have a chance. Do not split off with the 20 milers or half marathon runners.
6. Train for the race. While all marathons are 26.2 miles, it can help psychologically to understand where you might have difficulty.
7. Know your pace and stick to it. If you normally run a 4:15 time for marathons and are having a difficult time, listen to your body. Heat and humidity can have significant effects on a runner's ability to perform.
8. Take care of your skin. This means preparing to prevent chafing. Legs and nipples can bleed from excessive friction. This is common in a race as long as a marathon.
9. Eating carbohydrates the night before (about twelve hours prior) is smart. Using carbohydrates (in the form of race gel) during the race helps as well. Both strategies will help your body to function optimally on race day.