

# 2014 CAP CITY

## 5K, Quarter & Half Marathon

May 3rd, 2014

## Training Tips



### Week 6: Cross Training

Cross-training is any sport or exercise that supplements your main sport. Here are several reasons why runners and walkers should cross-train:

- **It helps balance your muscle groups.** Cross-training helps strengthen your non-walking/running muscles and rests your muscles. You can focus on specific muscles, that don't get worked as much while walking or running and may be weaker than your other muscles.
- **You'll maintain or even improve your cardiovascular fitness.** Many cross-training activities are great cardiovascular workouts, so they build on those similar benefits of walking and running.
- **It reduces your chance of injury.** By balancing your weaker muscles with your stronger ones, you'll help reduce your chance of injury. Participating in low-impact cross training activities, such as swimming or water running, will also lessen the stress on your joints, which are often a sore spots.
- **You'll avoid getting bored.** Doing the same thing day after day will eventually burn out even the most hard-core enthusiast. Cross-training gives you a much-needed mental break from repetition, which is especially important for those training for long-distance events such as half marathons.
- **You can continue to train with certain injuries,** while giving them proper time to heal. Runners and walkers suffering from injuries are sometimes told by their doctor to take a break from walking and running during their injury recovery. But, with certain injuries, it is possible to continue with cross-training. Cross-training can help maintain their fitness and deal better with the frustration of being sidelined.

### When Should I Cross Train?

The amount of cross-training you do really depends on how you're feeling -- both mentally and physically. In general, if you're a recreational walker or runner, try to supplement your 3-4 days of walking or running with 2-3 days of cross-training. If you're a competitive, walk or run 4-6 days a week, substitute a low-intensity cross-training workout for an easy walk or run or a rest day on 1-2 days week. Cross-training can also be great if you are traveling and may not be able to get outside or find a treadmill, but have access to other sports.

If you're dealing with an injury and sidelined, you may need to cross-train more frequently. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist to get advice on how much you should cross-train and what activities are best for your specific injury.

## Which Types of Activities are Best for Cross Training?

- **Swimming:** Swimming is an excellent cross-training activity because it's not weight-bearing, so it gives your joints a break. It allows you to build strength and endurance, and also improve flexibility. It's a great balance for walking or running because you'll really work your upper body, while giving your leg muscles a breather. Swimming is especially recommended for people who are prone to injuries or are recovering from an injury. Some people also find it very relaxing and meditative.
- **Water Running:** Water running is a great substitute for an easy training day. While you can run in the water without flotation aids (vests, belts, etc), you'll find the workout to be easier with them.
- **Cycling or Spinning:** Cycling and spin classes are also great low-impact ways to boost your cardiovascular fitness and strength, especially your quads and glutes.
- **Elliptical:** You'll get a total body cardiovascular workout on the elliptical machine. Their oval-like (ellipse) motion provides the user with the feel of classic cross-country skiing, stair climbing, and walking all in combination. You can program the elliptical to move in either a forward or backward motion, so you can work all the major muscles in your legs. Because the muscles used on the elliptical are similar to those you use when walking or running, the machine is a good low-impact alternative when an injury prevents you from running.
- **Rowing:** An excellent cardiovascular, low-impact activity, rowing strengthens the hips, buttocks, and upper body. Just make sure you learn proper the rowing technique to maximize the benefits of this activity and avoid injury.
- **Strength (or Weight) Training:** Strength training allows walkers and runners to improve the strength, create balance between unbalanced muscle groups, and focus on keeping their legs strong during injury recovery. You can use your own weight for resistance (pushups, for example), or weight training, where you use weights (free or machine) for resistance (leg press, for example). Strength training is an excellent opportunity to strengthen your core, which helps avoid fatigue and maintain their form.
- **Yoga:** Yoga offers some of the same benefits as strength training, since you'll use your body weight as resistance to strengthen your muscles. You'll also improve your flexibility since it involves a lot of stretching. It's also a great way to relax after a long run or tough workout.
- **Ice or Inline Skating:** Inline or ice skating is also another no-impact sport (as long as you don't fall!) and it's a great activity if you're recovering from shin splints, Achilles tendonitis or knee injuries. You'll really work your quadriceps, buttocks and lower-back muscles.

If you are beginning a training schedule for the first time, it is important to **talk to your physician prior to beginning a work out regiment**, especially if you have or are at risk for you have a heart problem or chronic disease, such as heart disease, diabetes or high blood pressure.