

1. **Running is a state of mind.** The only thing that determines your success or enjoyment of taking part is the way you think. Whatever your weight, size, shape or height, however fast or slow you run, it will relieve your stress, burn your calories, give you time to yourself, enable you to make loads of new friends and enhance your self-esteem. It doesn't matter what any other person or any stopwatch thinks, you're doing it for yourself because it makes you feel good.
2. **Having another woman or a group of women to run with** on a regular basis will help keep you motivated and ensure your safety. Plus, it's a lot more fun than running alone. Women runners become more than training partners; they're confidantes, counsellors and doctors too.
3. **Fast running burns more calories than slow running**, but slow running burns more calories than just about any other activity. In short, nothing will help you lose weight and keep it off the way running does. On top of that, it's inexpensive, it's accessible and if necessary, it can be done while pushing a stroller.
4. **Women run approximately 10 percent slower than men** based on the difference between men's and women's world records and although elite women have been improving twice as fast as elite men over the past three decades, women are not going to beat them just yet. However, we all know of individual women that can far outpace most men and Paula Radcliffe's marathon world record time of 2hours 15minutes, is faster than what 99.9 percent of the world's male population are capable of achieving. So don't ever feel inferior or let anyone tell you that women are. We're getting there!
5. **Just because you've got a partner, a house, a full-time job, young children and elderly relatives to cook for, wash for, iron for, clean for and ferry about doesn't mean you don't have time to run.** Running is time-efficient and the best stress-reducer on the market. You need this time. Taking it for yourself (by, say, letting your husband baby-sit while you run) will benefit the whole family. So rearrange your schedule because the benefits are life changing.
6. **No matter what your size**, it's a good idea to wear a sports bra when you run. By controlling breast motion, a sports bra will make you feel more



comfortable. Look for one that stretches horizontally but not vertically. And, most importantly, try it on before you buy. A sports bra should fit snugly, yet not feel too constrictive. Run or jump in place to see if it gives you the support you need.

7. **Men and women will never be equals in the urination department.** Men "whiz" through public toilets, while women stand in long slow lines and when it comes to running, men enjoy the ultimate convenience. However, a woman runner doesn't have to be a prisoner of her anatomy. Simply find a private place behind a tree or dense shrubbery, squat and pull the lining of your shorts over to one side. Just beware of using unfamiliar leaves for toilet paper.

8. **Women generally have narrower heels and feet than men**, so when you're buying runningshoes, your best bet will be a pair designed especially for women. If the shop you go to hasn't got a women's shoe section, then walk out and go to one that has. However, everybody is different and the bottom line is to buy the shoe that gives the best fit and passes the Dudley Ladies Good Shoe Test. If after going to a specialist shoe shop for runners, such as Sweatshop etc, you're still getting lower limb aches and pains or blisters, you may have a gait problem and should consult a podiatrist who specializes in treating runners.



9. **Controlled anaerobic training** intervals such as Dudley Ladies speed sessions, hill reps and fartlek training is the fastest way we know to fitness and may lead to gains in strength and speed similar to those produced by steroids but without the noxious side effects. Why? Because High-intensity anaerobic running is one of the most potent stimulators of natural human growth hormones i.e. those that contribute to stronger muscles and, ultimately, enhanced performance.
10. **Speedwork** allows you to explore the boundaries of your ability and can add an exciting element to your regular running. Though you may have taken up running just for fitness, after a while it can be fun to see just how fast you can go. Start with short "pickups" (bursts of speed) sprinkled throughout a regular run and move up to formal, once-a-week interval sessions for example, running four to six fast 400s with 200-metre recovery jogs in between. You'll be delighted with the results.

11. Exploring your competitive side can offer benefits beyond running.

Racing can help you tap into a goal-setting, assertive and self-disciplined side of your personality. Channelled correctly, these attributes can boost your success in other parts of your life-such as in the workplace.

12. One of the smartest things a woman runner can do is to include strength training in her weekly regimen. Lifting weights can help prevent injuries by correcting the muscle imbalances caused by running. It has also been proven to enhance bone health and elevate moods.

13. Health benefits from running. Heart disease in the United States kills 10 times more women than breast cancer each year. One of the best weapons for fighting heart disease is exercise. Running in particular, lowers your blood pressure and resting heart rate, raises your "good" HDL cholesterol levels and helps you maintain a healthy weight.



14. Medical wisdom upholds that moderate exercise during a normal pregnancy is completely safe for the baby. The most important precaution is to avoid getting overheated (it is believed that a core body temperature above 101 degrees could increase the risk of birth defects). To make sure you're staying cool enough, early in your pregnancy take your temperature rectally immediately after a run. As long as your temperature is below 101 degrees, you can maintain that same level of effort throughout your pregnancy. If you increase your intensity or duration, check your temperature again. Also, skip the post-run hot tub.

15. A Harvard University study found that women that ran produce a less potent form of estrogen than their sedentary counterparts. As a result, women runners cut by half their risks of developing breast and uterine cancer and by two-thirds their risk of contracting the form of diabetes that most commonly plagues women.

16. The two minerals women runners need to pay the most attention to are calcium and iron. (Iron is especially important for menstruating women.) Your RDA for calcium is 1,200 milligrams; good sources are dairy products, dark green leafy vegetables, broccoli, canned sardines and salmon. Your RDA for iron is 15 milligrams; foods high in iron include liver, fortified dry cereals, Cream of Wheat, beef and spinach. Note: Women runners who train

intensively, have been pregnant in the past two years or consume fewer than 2,500 calories a day should get more than routine blood tests for iron status, since these test only for anaemia, the final stage of iron deficiency. Instead, request more revealing tests, including those for serum ferritin, transferrin saturation and total iron-binding capacity.

17. **There's no need to pass up a run or a race just because you're having your period.** If you're suffering from cramps, running will often alleviate the pain, due to the release during exercise of pain-relieving chemicals called endorphins. Speedwork or a hill session can be especially effective, according to researcher Jody Weitzman of Women's Health and Support Services. To guard against leakage, try using two tampons (side by side) for extra protection.

18. **Running helps produce healthy skin.** According to dermatologists, running stimulates circulation, transports nutrients and flushes out waste products. All of this leads to a reduction in subcutaneous fat, making skin clearer and facial features more distinct.

19. **If you become underweight through dieting too much** and your periods become light or nonexistent, you may be endangering your bones. Amenorrhea (lack of a monthly period) means that little or no estrogen is circulating in your body. Estrogen is essential for the replacement of bone minerals. Amenorrheic women can stop but not reverse the damage by taking estrogen and getting plenty of calcium. Any woman with infrequent periods or no periods should consult her gynaecologist, preferably one sensitive to the needs of runners. Have your Body Fat Percentage checked regularly.

20. **If you were a regular runner before you became pregnant,** you might have a bigger baby, which is good news, since larger infants tend to be stronger and weather physical adversity better. Researchers at Columbia University found that women who burned up to 1,000 calories a week through exercise gave birth to infants weighing 5 percent more than offspring of inactive moms. Those who burned 2,000 calories per week delivered babies weighing 10 percent more.



21. **If you ran early in your pregnancy,** you might want to try switching to a lower-impact exercise during the latter stages and after delivery. Due to the release of the hormone relaxin during pregnancy, some ligaments and

tendons might soften, making you more vulnerable to injury. Walking, swimming, stationary bicycling and pool running (you'll be even more buoyant than usual) are good choices.

22. **Trying to lose fat by eating less and less and running more and more doesn't work.** The more you exercise and the less you eat, the more likely your body is to "hibernate." That is, you'll conserve calories and thwart your efforts to lose fat. The better bet is to exercise reasonably and to increase your food intake early in the day to fuel your training. Eat breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Then eat lightly for dinner and afterward.



23. **Running doesn't make your breasts sag or make your uterus collapse.** Believe it or not, these old myths resurface from time to time. In fact, running tightens and firms all the muscles it uses, so it will help prevent sagging rather than cause it. There are no

recorded cases of running resulting in a fallen uterus (or any other organ, for that matter). Where this idea got started is a mystery.

24. **"That time of the month"** (or even the few days preceding it) is not the time when women run their worst. The hardest time for women to run fast is about a week before menstruation begins (a week after ovulation). That's when women's levels of the key hormone progesterone peak, inducing a much-higher-than-normal breathing rate during exercise. The excess ventilation tends to make running feel more difficult than usual.

25. **If your nursing baby gags and spits your breast milk back at you,** it may be because babies dislike the taste of post-exercise breast milk, which is high in lactic acid and imparts a sour flavour. A study at Indiana University found that nursing moms who logged 35 minutes on the treadmill faced off with grimacing, reluctant infants if they nursed soon afterward. Researchers

recommend that you either collect milk for later feeding or breast-feed before running.



26. **Running with headphones** outdoors is a safety hazard in more ways than one. You won't be able to hear cars, cyclists or someone approaching who intends to do you harm. Attackers will always pick a victim who looks vulnerable. When you have headphones on, that means you.

27. **It may not be much consolation**, but men are sometimes verbally harassed and occasionally threatened on the run, just as women are. Run smart, but don't let insignificant taunting limit your freedom. Runners are in it together.

28. **Women who run alone should take precautions:** Leave a note at home stating when you left, where you'll be running and when you expect to return. Carry a personal alarm or self-defence spray. Stick to well-populated areas, and don't always run the same predictable route. Avoid running at night. Don't wear jewellery or headphones. Pay attention to your surroundings. Carry ID, but include only your name and an emergency phone number.



29. **Running with a dog** provides the best of both worlds; you get to run alone but with a friend. A dog is both a faithful companion who will go anywhere anytime and a loyal guardian who'll discourage anyone from harming you. The optimal running dog is medium-sized with a bloodline bred for endurance. An easy rule of thumb: Hunting breeds make the best runners.

30. **Dudley Ladies consider every woman runner to be an athlete**, whether she's fast or slow, tall or short, small or large and you should think of yourself as the same.