

# Hit the ground running safely

If you're ready to train for a charity 5K or more serious road running, follow this advice from Saint Louis University physical therapy professor Chris Sebelski. You'll hit the ground running and have realistic expectations about the work ahead.

- Before you begin, visit your doctor for a complete overall body check-up and talk about your exercise plans.
- It's easy to go overboard during the enthusiasm of planning, but be sure you accurately acknowledge your current level of fitness. If you haven't been exercising at all, you'll want to start with a walking/jogging mix.
- Consider journaling to keep track of your progress and how you feel.
- Make small steps and celebrate little victories.
- Anticipate setbacks and obstacles (a cold, an injury, caregiving) and adjust your workout.
- Always do something. A few minutes doing squats is better than nothing.
- Consume calories smartly (lean proteins, whole grains). Drink water.
- Cross train with yoga for stretching or Pilates to build core strength.
- Join friends to train. Follow each other on Facebook. Blog about your experience. Let others cheer you on.

