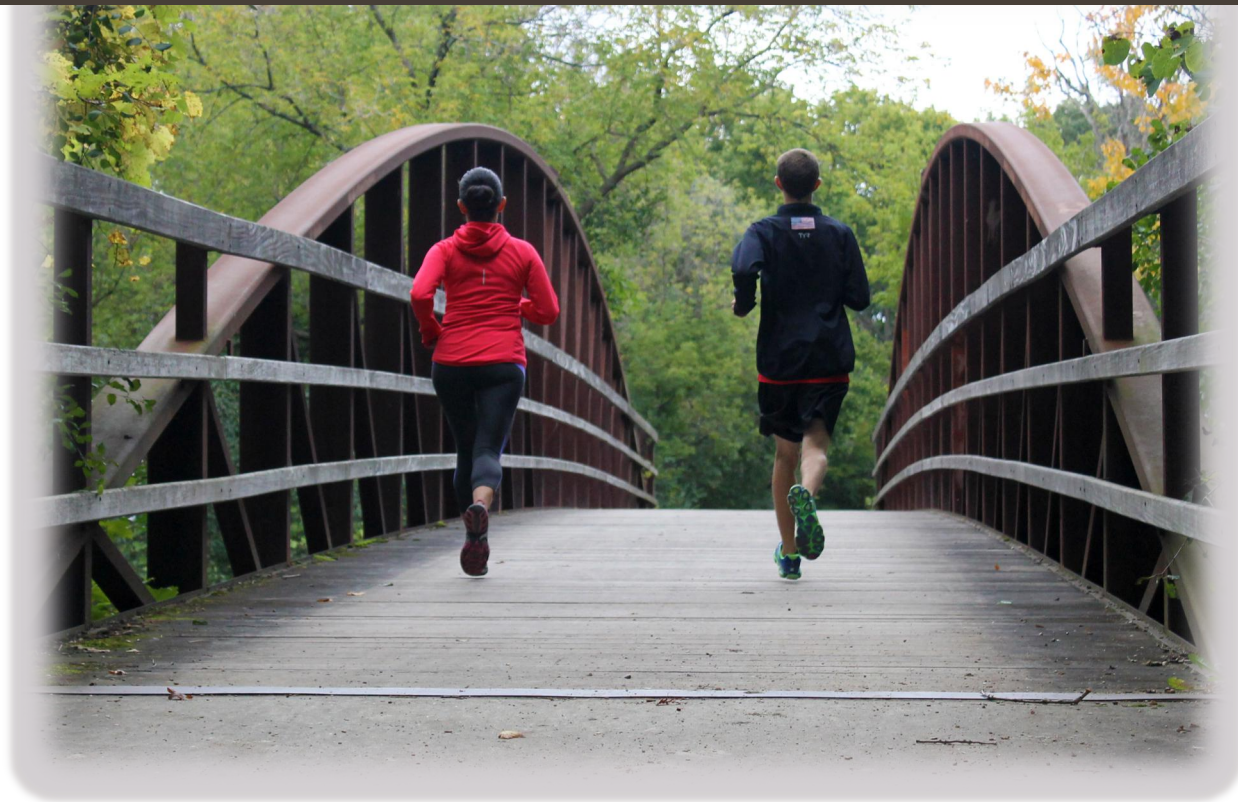


# *Injury Proof your Running*



the manual touch  
PHYSICAL THERAPY

*Reclaim Movement, Function and Life*

*By: Denise Schwartz, PT, IMT, C*



## Specialties

- Whole Body Approach
- Functional Rehab
- Myofascial Release
- Integrative Manual therapy
- Cranial therapy
- Spinal conditions
- Kinesiotaping
- Running Injury Recovery/Prevention
- Balance/Vestibular rehab



## About Denise Schwartz

The Manual Touch Physical Therapy opened in August of 2010, providing a whole body approach to health using both traditional and nontraditional PT practices. Denise Schwartz, Owner and Founder, fully believes this is the best approach to facilitating each patient's ability to overcome pain and achieve a higher quality of life.

Denise began her career working in a Level 1 trauma hospital for 14 years in the outpatient area, treating a variety of orthopedic and neurological patients. Having taken more than 5,000 continuing education hours to further her PT knowledge in manual therapy, spinal care, running and functional rehabilitation (rehab), Denise is certified and extensively trained in Integrative Manual Therapy (IMT).

Expanding her patient reach and impact, Denise then went on to start CenterIMT Chicago. As part owner of three CenterIMT clinics, she organized numerous IMT courses and mentored other IMT therapists in the methods she has mastered to provide the best results for her patients.

Denise has assisted at many manual therapy classes and has taught myofascial release and therapeutic taping to other physical therapists at continuing education courses.

Denise began running later in life which quickly became a passion. Despite multiple injuries common in older runners, she has gone on to complete numerous half marathons and her first full marathon in 2015.



# 8 Ways to Injury Proof Your Running

Runners love to run. Runners understand the runners high. When runners can't run because of injury, they become cranky. Unfortunately, getting injured from running is a common and expected occurrence, simply because of the repetitive nature of the sport. However, there are some things that you can do in order to reduce your chances of injury.

## 1. Take a Stand

Engaging the lower abdominals helps support the back whether you are sitting, standing, walking, or running. Use this simple trick to find muscles you didn't know you had.

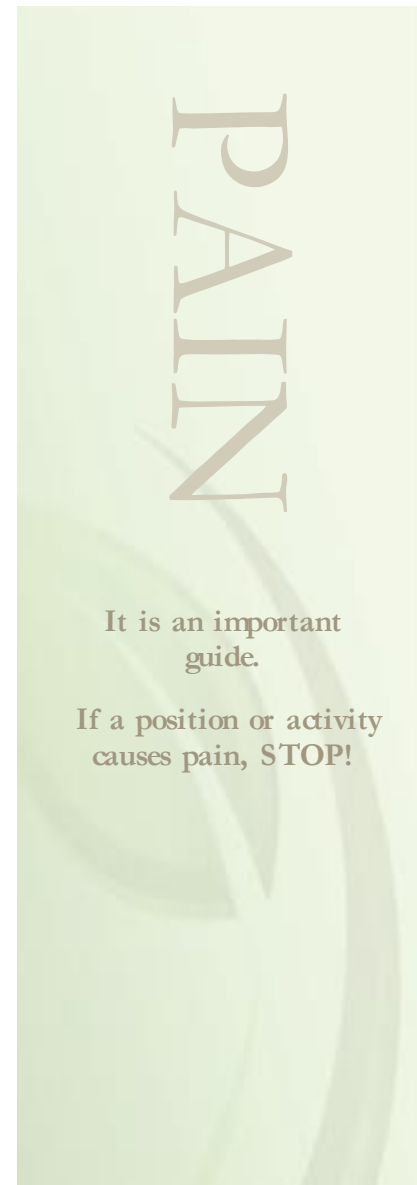
- Place tongue on the back of top teeth and make the “thhh” sound. Hold for 5 seconds, rest 5 seconds and repeat 10x; complete this series morning and night. Use this trick throughout your day.
- Stand with feet close together, rock forward to balls of feet and back towards the heel, moving from the ankles not the hips; repeat this several times daily.

## 2. “Sit Up!”

Runners typically train 5-15+ hours per week, leaving the majority of our waking hours not training. As such, you must pay attention to your body position throughout your day whether you are sitting, standing, walking, or doing household activities. Traditional advice from the time you were small rears its ugly head again, to “Sit Up”. Try these tips to regain your posture and improve sitting comfort.

- Place your knees lower than hips, a wedge under can help!
- Use a lumbar support pad behind the small of your back to support the normal curvature of the spine and promotes proper posture.
- Choose a firm chair over something mushy that will compromise the position of your back.
- Keep feet flat on the floor; do not cross your legs.
- Sitting the majority of your day will set you up for a boatload of issues as outlined in this great infographic:

<https://goo.gl/pxZW4b>



### 3. Maximize your “Z’s

Being sure to get a good night’s sleep and taking recovery days during a training cycle are equally important as having training days. Sleeping is a time for the body to rest, recover and heal. Use these positions for the biggest bang for your sleeping buck.

- Sleep on your back with one or more pillows under your thighs.
- Sleep on your side with a medium size pillow between your legs; one side may be better than the other.
- Avoid tummy sleeping.
- Mattresses should be firm with enough cushioning to support the natural curves of the body.

### 4. Appropriate shoes

Running is a fairly minimal activity not needing any special equipment except for a good pair of running shoes that are appropriate for your body. Choose a running store where the salespeople know how to observe your gait and your feet to help you choose the right shoes. The store should have a good return policy so you can test run your new shoes for at least 2-3 weeks. How can you decide which shoes are right?

- Primarily - Do they make your body feel good all over (think your knees, hips, back not just your feet) when standing, walking and running? **Take a test run!**
- Can you stand on 1 leg easily without losing balance?
- Can you stand on 1 leg without losing balance during these activities:
  - ✓ Raise other leg out to side 5x?
  - ✓ Bring other leg across 5x?
  - ✓ Turn your head side to side?

### 5. Training is training; Racing is racing

Most of your training runs will be done at an easy pace or at a targeted pace to prepare your body for race day and get to the starting line injury-free. It is important to understand your individual training paces in order to meet your race goals, especially if you train with a group and your best buddy may be able to run a comfortable pace much faster.

Remember, training is not about competition with your peers. **Save your energy for race day!**

### 6. Cross-train

There is an adage that says if you want to improve in something then you need to practice doing that activity the most. This is true for running; however, running is a repetitive activity of pounding 2.5x our body weight with each step. If you’re out for a 5 mile + run, that’s a lot of steps and body weight to carry around. Adding in a day or two of cross-training such as elliptical, bike, swim, or yoga can give our joints and soft tissue a much needed break from the pounding.

### 7. If your injury-prone, consider a run/walk method

Understanding your body is key to a successful training cycle, staying injury free, and ultimately meeting race day goals. If your injury prone, like I am, consider a run/walk method of training and racing. The many benefits of run/walk method allows the runner:

- to build time on their feet while limiting the amount of pounding steps
- to maintain great running form without muscular fatigue
- to reset their running form as they begin each cycle of running
- to reduce post run soreness
- to be able to run faster during the run cycles than if running continuously and possibly have a faster race time

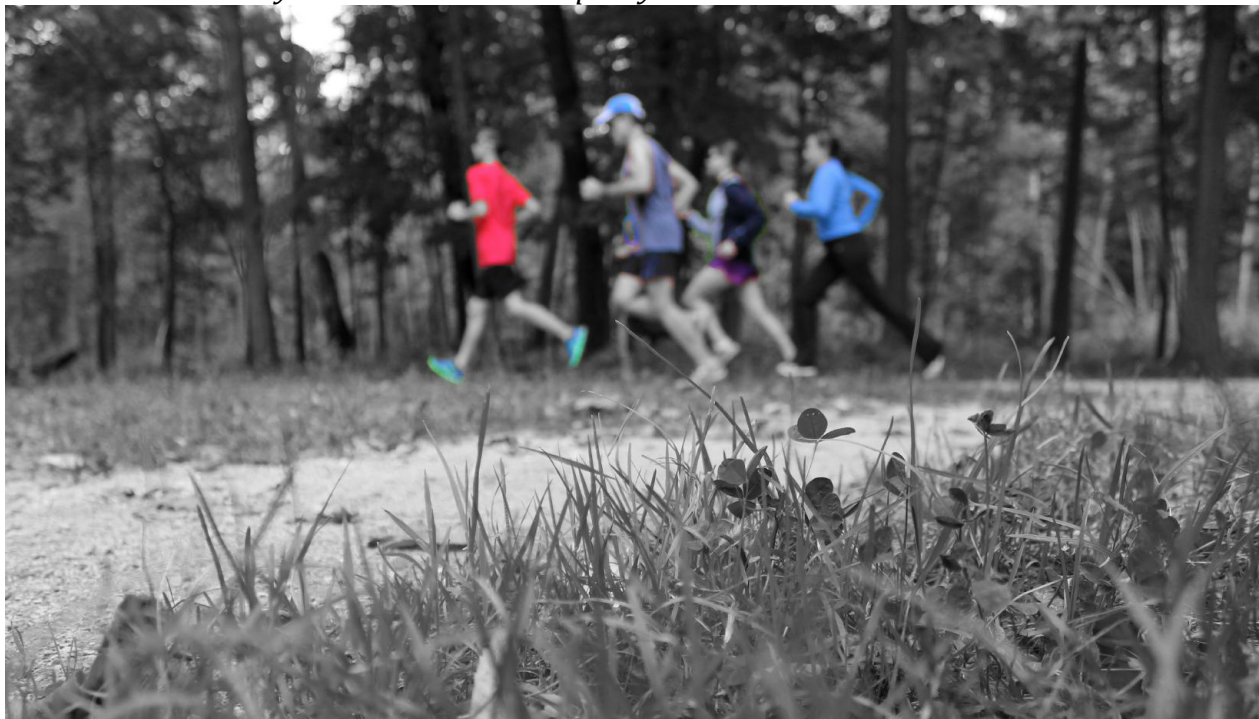


## 8. Supplemental exercise program including Mobility, Balance, and Strength exercises

- Runners need to have enough **Mobility** in their joints - spine, shoulders, hips, knees, ankles, and big toes in order to absorb each step and be as efficient as possible.
- Runners need great **Balance** as running is a series of 1-legged hops.
- Runners need **Strength** in order to create enough force to propel their body through the air efficiently.

As everyone is different, an exercise program for one, is not necessarily the one for all. It's important to be your own health advocate for vigilant prevention is key. Ask your MD or chiropractor for a script for PT so you can find out the specific exercises you need to prevent injury.

*The information presented in this article is for educational purposes only and is no guarantee to prevent injury. If you are having pain or discomfort while running seek out medical attention sooner than later so you can return to the sport you love.*



If you want to share your story or have questions about your running please email me, I'd love to hear from you: [DeniseS@themanualtouch.com](mailto:DeniseS@themanualtouch.com)

Visit us: [www.TheManualTouch.com](http://www.TheManualTouch.com)