

Run your own *race*

It's an activity everyone can enjoy - you just need to know how to do it properly

You can do it anywhere any time, it's fun and the health benefits are immense. Did you know 200 million people worldwide have taken to running in the last 5 - 10 years?

Running has universal appeal and Gold Coast physiotherapist Brad Beer says he is endlessly amazed by the diversity of people who run - and run for a host of reasons.

"There are so many things I personally love about running," Brad says. "The fitness, satisfaction of achieving a personal best time or run, satisfaction derived from a training run, camaraderie with other runners, and just the splendour of the freedom of movement unrestrained and at its essence so pure. It's just you and your shoes (and some clothes, of course!)"

Brad was born with the running gene. He ran cross-country at school and competed in junior triathlons for 10 years. A bad accident halted his passion for many years, but he was determined to get back into it.

"A severe bike crash resulted in me not being able to run and avoiding it due to post-crash complications for seven years. But eight years ago I returned to running with a new found love of it and pain free, and have been running almost daily ever since," he says.

Brad says anyone can run - and run pain free.

"Running is a learned skill that can be learned like tennis or swimming, but sadly many people are unaware that this is the case. I wrote my book - *You CAN Run Pain and Injury Free* - with the chief aim of inspiring people to take action who have deferred running due to the mistaken belief that it inevitably results in succumbing to the pain of injury.

For those who believe they can't run, won't be any good at it or that it hurts, Brad says of those 200 million people who have taken up the activity in the last 5-10 years, many of them would have thought it impossible or unlikely that they could run too.

He's the perfect role model for those who believe running isn't for them considering the bike crash that left him unable to run, only to get back into it and win many accolades, including a silver medal at the 2012 World Triathlon Championships in Auckland New Zealand (30-34yrs), followed by being crowned the 2013 Australian Olympic Distance 30-34yr Triathlon Champion.

"On a non-competition front though, my greatest running win is being able to run daily free from knee pain that for seven years meant I was unable to squat on my leg or run more than 1km without pain. This experience has meant that I have great appreciation to be able to run irrespective of my competition results," he says.

There are many known health benefits of running, including lowered risk of cardio-vascular disease, stroke, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, breast and colon cancer, type two diabetes and clinical depression.

Not to mention the positive effects on body weight and the subsequent reduced likelihood of developing osteoarthritis of the knees (and hips).

Brad says this often confounds many people as many incorrectly believe that running wears joints out. Recent research also validated an increased life expectancy for runners compared with non-runners of several years.

The top 5 tips to running pain free

1. Discover your running body: In other words, gain an awareness of your body's strength and weaknesses before you commence running. Your physio can help with this.



2. Learn to run with great technique: There are five key principles of running with great technique including running with the correct turn-over rate (cadence), positioning of the body and foot strike landing. Everyone from the beginner to the most seasoned runner can learn and benefit from these technique tips.

3. Select an appropriate pair of running shoes: It's been said that how the runner moves is more important than what's on a runner's feet, but what's on a runner's feet affects how a runner moves! It's important to get shoe selection right.

4. Develop hip strength: A stable pelvis (core stability) assists with running faster but also lessening adverse loads on the body, which can subsequently result in injury. A few regularly completed exercises can work wonders in developing hip strength and stability.

5. Avoid training errors by recognising the power of rest: When a runner is starting out sometimes their over zealousness can bring them unstuck. Sudden spikes in training volume or load can prove injurious very quickly. Seasoned runners are also susceptible to making training errors. Missing a rest session can result in over load on the body's tissues resulting in injury development.



BRAD BEER is the founder of Pogo Physio and his Amazon best-selling book *You CAN Run Pain and Injury* is available at bradbeer.com.au