

Congratulations! Whether this is your first marathon or your 30<sup>th</sup> marathon, the decision to run is an admirable one. Current statistics show that only 0.5% of the U.S. population will complete a marathon in their lifetime. Knowing that, I myself set out to complete one several years ago. I personally made every mistake in the book, lack of training, lack of preparation, purchasing all new equipment and using it for the first time in the race, and blatant disregard to all advice from professionals.

My name is Dr. Brandon Gumbiner, Board Certified Podiatrist in Foot and Ankle/Rearfoot Reconstructive Surgery for **Indiana Podiatry Group**. This article will be full of professional advice you can choose to ignore, but hopefully won't. If you follow these recommendations, it will help to ensure success and decrease risk of injury over the many miles you are about to embark on running. How has your training gone? In case you didn't know, it is not natural to run 5, 13, or 26 miles for most humans and proper training is key to prevent injury. If your training has not been all that you hoped it would be, be honest with yourself and consider a walk-run method for the race. Hal Higdon has a great program that you can read about at [www.halhighdon.com](http://www.halhighdon.com).



## Some keys to know before starting out on race day or even a training day:

1. **Stretching-** Be sure to stretch before and after the race. I recommend you do a light warm up the morning of the race. Get the muscles moving and primed by a few jumping jacks, jogging in place, and mild stretching. After the race, spend a good 30 minutes stretching all of the core leg, back, and arm muscles.
2. **Shoes-** Do not wear a new pair of shoes the day of the race. Ideally you would have worn a good pair of shoes for the first 2/3 of your training and a new pair for the last 1/3 that you will wear the day of the race. Make sure you have been properly sized and fit for your shoes. **The Fitted Foot** in Columbus and Seymour have professionals that can set you up for success by sizing you and helping you choose a proper shoe for your foot type.
3. **Socks-** Cotton socks will absorb moisture and give you wet socks during the race. Choose a synthetic sock that is no more than 10% cotton to reduce moisture. I recommend SmartWool socks, which can be found at **The Fitted Foot**.
4. **Blisters-** Blisters form from excessive friction between the shoes and the feet. Make sure your shoes are laced up snug. Purchase some moleskin and place over problem areas, specifically the joint behind the big toe, the back of the heel, and the joint behind the little toe. Wash your feet well and dry. Use rubbing alcohol to remove all skin oil. Apply antiperspirant to the feet and toes. Finally, apply foot powder over the foot and between the toes. Using these techniques will reduce friction and the potential for blistering.

There are many injuries that can occur during a marathon race. The most common that we see are blisters, black toenails, shin splints, stress fractures, and plantar fasciitis. Following the advice above will help prevent these issues, but if you are experiencing significant pain after the race give our office a call. We will have open appointments and spots for people that need to get in the week following the race.

Best wishes to you all, and have a great run! If you made every mistake I made, you might find it reassuring to know that I still finished the marathon. Right in front of the guys sweeping up the course!