

RUNNING SHORTS

How do you get started?

By Ken Johnson

Most of us can look in the mirror and recognize that we need to lose weight and get in shape. Obviously, that is easier said than done.

Running is a great way to help you lose weight and improve your physical condition. The real challenge is not getting started, but continuing a running program for the long term. Don't even start running if you are not convinced that it will improve your life. And, you must have the motivation to carve out the time in your busy schedule and make running a priority.

Make sure you check with your doctor before getting started and buy a good pair of running shoes. Visit a running specialty store and get an experienced associate to help you find the right shoe for you.

We are all different and what motivates us to run and stay fit may be different. One of the best ways to get started is to find a friend, who shares the same motivation as you do, to start running with. Set a running schedule and stick to it. It is best to run three times a week.

Start off with a combination of running and walking at the track. Start with quarter mile runs and gradually increase the distance. Increase your running distance by no more than 20 percent and run the distance three times before increasing again. Don't dare let something else interfere with your running. Before long, you will feel the difference and you will be up to three miles.

To maximize the benefit to your cardio vascular system, you should run for 30 minutes three times of week.

Vary your routine to ward off boredom. Run at different times of the day. Rather than always running on the track, run on the roads or the trails at Huntsville State Park.

Sign up for a 5K race (3.1 miles). There are plenty in the area and races will be a new experience for you. Races give you a chance to measure your success, compete with others and enjoy the camaraderie with other runners.

We all have just one life to live. So, make the best of it for you and your family. Get started on a healthy life style.

Recent race results:

Rocky Raccoon 50-Mile Trail Run, Huntsville State Park, Feb. 5

Ken Johnson, 69 15:16:27

Remission Run, 5K (3.1 miles), Conroe, Feb. 5

Robert Duncan, 50 19:45 (1st in age group)

J. C. Guzman, 39 19:55 (1st in age group)

Darryl Shreves, 50 36:59

Anna Shreves, 51 37:00

Sunday Night 5K, The Woodlands, Feb. 6

Ken Johnson, 69 35:39

Run the Woodlands, 5K, The Woodlands, Feb. 12

Steve Bickford, 50 23:33

Cathy Bickford, 49 45:00

Run Away with my Heart, 5 Miles, Spring, Feb. 12

J. C. Guzman, 39 33:34 (1st in age group)

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

Feb. 27 – Sweetheart Run, 5K and 1-Mile, Bowers Stadium parking lot

For more information about this race and others, visit the Seven Hills Running Club web site at <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.