

RUNNING SHORTS

What motivates you to run?

By Ken Johnson

All of us are motivated to do something special. It may involve our work, hobby, family, church or a project supporting the community. Many of us are so focused on what we like to do that we lose sight of the importance of staying in good physical condition.

Staying in good physical condition supports everything else we do. It should be one of your top priorities.

Running is a great way to achieve and maintain physical fitness. It will improve your cardiovascular system and at the same time make you look and feel better.

A study conducted at Stanford University Medical Center tracked several hundred runners and non-runners over a 21-year period. At the end of 19 years, 34% of the non-runners had died, compared to only 15% of the runners. What's more, the study showed that runners reached a specified level of disability 6.2 years later in life than non-runners.

While this study should be motivation enough to make you run, it does not address the many other benefits of running and staying in good physical condition. Running improves your quality of life. And, that's important to your family, too.

You can still pursue whatever makes you happy, but running should be a part of your life. You may be motivated to run, but it is important not be distracted from running on a regular basis. If you only run when you have nothing else to do or only when the weather is perfect, you will not benefit from the sport. Set up a schedule and stick with it. To maximize the benefit to your cardiovascular system, run for 30 minutes three times a week. If you want to train to run a 5K (3.1 miles) or longer races, there are plenty of training programs on the Internet.

Having a running partner is good, but running partners are not always available. Set your own schedule and do not rely on the availability of someone else.

Do not worry about how fast you are or the distance you are able to run, compared to experienced runners. Set your own short and long term goals and stick with them.

Of course, always consult with your physician before starting a running program.

Recent race results:

Seabrook Lucky Trail Marathon (26.2 miles), Seabrook, Mar. 18

Jacob Gautreaux, 39 3:33:50 (1st in age group)

Half Marathon (13.1 miles)

Ken Johnson, 70 3:29:07 (1st in age group)

Dash of the Titans Mud Run, 5K (3.1 miles), Houston, Mar. 17

Jose Moreno, 50 28:19 (2nd in age group)

Bayou City Classic 10K (6.2 miles), Houston, Mar. 10

Patrick Broaddus, 28 1:00:20

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

Mar. 25 – Run the Trails, 3.5 miles, Huntsville State Park

Apr. 14 – Hog’s Hunt Trail Run, 50K, 25K and 10K, Huntsville State Park

Apr. 28 – Spring Fling, 5K & 1-Mile Run/Walk, Elkins Lake Sub-division

For more information about these races and a link to registration, visit the Seven Hills Running Club web site at <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.