

Little Athletics running events

Running is an awesome step towards health and wellness and a key component of the Little Athletics program. But there are some important things to consider as a new runner (and experienced) in protecting yourself from injury and getting through training and competition. Why? Because an injured runner is a very unhappy runner!

Risk Factors for Running Injuries

Factors increasing the risk for running injuries are separated into several categories: running/training, health and lifestyle, and strength factors.

Running/Training Factors – The most common running injuries result from overuse. Studies show training more than six times and running between 50-60km per week increases the risk of injury. Injuries are also more common in those participating in over six organised running events in a year. Running less than 40km over 1-3 sessions per week decreases the risk of injury.

Other things to consider are running technique, shoe choice and running surface. Whilst these figures are for adults, children have a similar tendency for overuse injuries. Of those 1-3 sessions a week – one might be Little Athletics, 2 might be that basketball or netball game and a third might be with friends – it doesn't all have to be organised sport.

Health and Lifestyle Factors – Unfortunately, once you have sustained a running injury and this has lasted for more than one month, you are at greater risk of getting another one. Hence it is important to get onto those niggles quickly to get complete resolution of your pain.

Strength Factors – Two muscle groups important for shock absorption and controlled running are the calf and hips. **For injury prevention, aim for 25 single leg calf raises, 25 single leg bridges and 22 single leg squats all with great control.** How many can you do?

What Can You Do?

Now this is not all doom and gloom. Of these risk factors, all can be easily modified to prevent injury and allow you to continue running.

Finding the right balance for frequency and intensity of training is vital. This balance depends on your running goals. Training for a leisurely 5km run has different requirements to marathon preparation. However, it is always best to avoid 'too much, too soon'; plan on no more than a 10% increase in intensity and distance every couple of weeks.

Strengthening the core and leg muscles helps reduce the likelihood of injury. To this end, integrating Clinical Pilates into your training regimen is effective at improving lumbopelvic muscle strength and control.

To keep running happily try out these prevention strategies and if you do develop any niggles or signs of injury seek timely treatment. We offer a **FREE initial assessment** and can find the optimal balance for training and exercises to run injury free.

