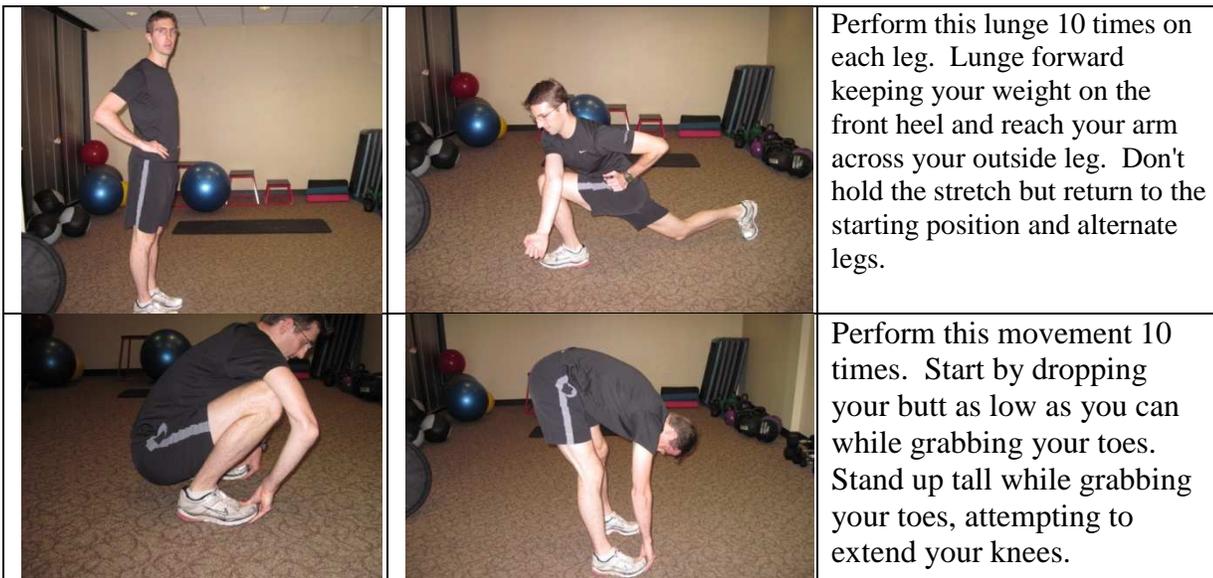


Three Secrets to Distance Running

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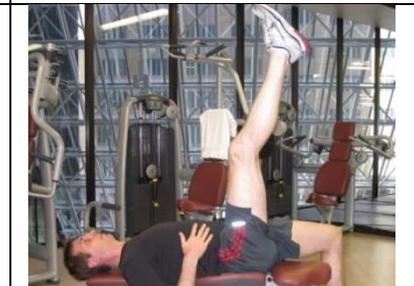
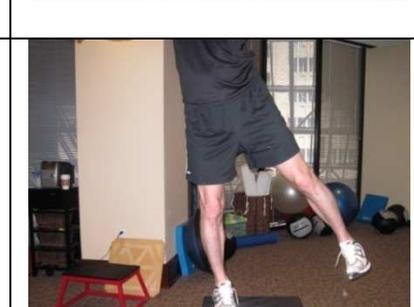
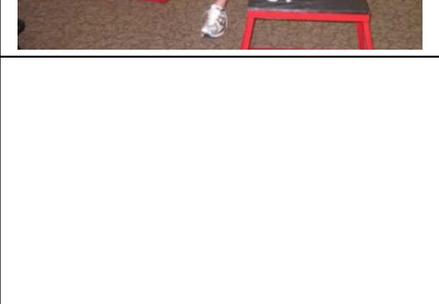
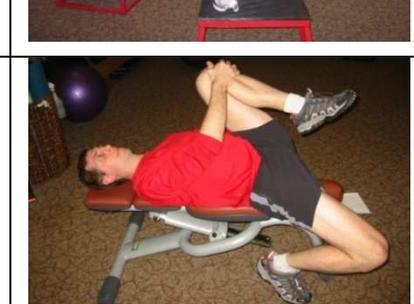
Fall is here, temperatures are dropping, and runners everywhere are starting to train for races. Distance runners are mentally tough athletes who actually get a “runner’s high” when their bodies want to quit and shut down. Due in part to their incredible endurance, drive to win, and inability to quit, runners are some of the most stubborn athletes I have treated. Runners have some of the highest rates of overuse injuries compared to all other athletes that I treat. Many of these overuse injuries progress throughout the running season, causing runners to skip races or to discontinue training altogether. Fortunately, most of these injuries can be avoided with a little planning. I have outlined three basic concepts that can help all runners “go the distance” injury free throughout the running season.

1. Warm up properly: A proper running warm up routine should consist of active stretches, which may be safer than holding a stretched position over a period of time. This type of stretching allows the muscles and joints to be placed under stress in a full range of motion. Below are images of two easy active stretches that should be performed before you start to run.



2. Utilize periodization: Periodization simply refers to the process of planning training runs and resistance workouts that progress total distance and intensity while including rest periods. This training strategy helps to improve overall running performance while avoiding injuries. There are four general rules I apply to all running programs that have proven to be successful over the years: (1) don’t run more than 3 times per week; (2) don’t increase your running distance by more than one mile per week on your long run days; (3) perform one long run and one or two short intense interval runs per week; and (4) decrease the frequency of your training runs by 50 % or stop running for one week and rest every five - six weeks.

3. Perform resistance training: Resistance training is one of the most important cross training strategies because it can increase speed and decrease injuries. Most runners will experience at least one serious overuse injury during their lifetime. I have been able to help many runners avoid these injuries by having them perform the movements shown below two times per week throughout the running season.

		<p>1. Perform 2 sets of 15 hip raises per leg. Start by sucking your abdomen in and raising your knee towards your chest. Slowly return your leg to the starting position. Perform all repetitions on one leg, then the other. Rest 60 seconds between sets.</p>
		<p>2. Perform 2 sets of 15 leg lifts per leg. Raise and lower the extended leg slowly keeping your abdomen contracted so you don't arch your back off the bench. Perform all repetitions on one leg, then the other. Rest 60 seconds between sets.</p>
		<p>3. Perform 2 sets of 15 leg raises per leg. Raise your leg as high as you can without moving your trunk. Keep your toes pointed forward, not towards the ceiling. Slowly lower your leg and repeat all repetitions on one leg, rest 45 seconds, then perform all repetitions on the other leg.</p>
		<p>4. Perform 2 sets of 10 step-ups per leg. Use the smallest step-up box. Step up reaching the outside leg across your body and push through your heel to stand tall. Next, move the non-weight bearing leg out to the side of your body keeping your toes pointed forward. Perform all repetitions on one leg, then the other.</p>
		<p>5. Perform this stretch on each leg for 60 seconds. Pull one knee up towards your chest as far as you can. Next try to push your heel to the ground of the leg being stretched. Hold for 60 seconds and perform on the other leg as well.</p>