

THE DAY and NIGHT BEFORE THE RACE

1. This is not the time to experiment with new things. Plan ahead so you can stick to your usual routine of foods, activities, beverages, and sleep.
2. Limit strenuous activity and time on your feet.
 - a. Some find that a short easy run of one to three miles prevents feelings of stiffness and sluggishness on race day
 - b. Remember the time for training has passed. This is a time to allow your body and mind to prepare using all of the training you have already put in.
3. Large or excessive carb-loading meals the night before the race are probably not necessary. Rather, eat a modest size balanced meal consisting predominately of carbohydrates with some protein and minimal fat the evening before the race. A good goal would be 60% carbohydrates, 30% protein, and 10% fat.
4. Maintain hydration by drinking adequate fluids.
 - a. Mild dehydration is often experienced during traveling so make a conscious effort to drink adequate fluids.
 - b. The dry desert environment of Las Vegas can cause the unacclimated to lose more fluid through evaporation than they may be used to replacing. Therefore, special attention should be made to drinking adequately to replace the additional losses.
 - c. Though no one rule applies to everyone a good general goal is to drink enough so that one's urine is a light yellow color.
5. Check the weather forecast and make sure you have appropriate attire for the expected conditions both for the race start and during the race.
6. Try to get a good night's sleep.
 - a. Between traveling, sleeping in an unfamiliar environment and the excitement of the upcoming race this is often tough.
 - b. Probably more important is the rest and sleep you have got in the preceding days.
7. Sedatives and over-the-counter medications containing antihistamines should generally be avoided.

RACE MORNING

1. Again, stick to the routines you have established during training.
2. Try to have your favorite pre-race breakfast items available. General guidelines suggest a light breakfast consisting primarily of complex carbohydrates.
3. Most experts suggest 8-16 ounces of water or sports drink 1-2 hours prior to race start.
4. Dress for the weather conditions.
 - a. Las Vegas weather history for December 2¹:
 - i. Average high 60°F, Average low 39°F
 - ii. Record high 78°F, Record low 24°F
 - iii. Average precipitation 0.01 inches, Record precipitation 0.26 inches
 - b. General clothing guidelines²

Greater than 45°F – shorts & short sleeves/singlet

Less than 45°F – consider tights, gloves, long sleeve shirt

Less than 30°F – as above, consider jacket

Applies to runners (those who will be walking or covering the course at a slow pace may require more clothing)

- c. Remember that you will probably be standing still in the waiting area for at least 30 minutes and maybe as long as one to two hours depending on when you arrive and how quickly racers move through the start gate.
 - d. Wear layers that you can shed or tie around your waist or neck both at the start line when the runners set off and later during the race as your body heat rises.
 - e. Synthetic materials or alternatively newer wool materials generally make for better running apparel than cotton.
 - f. Hats, gloves, windbreakers, and sunglasses should be considered
 - g. Have items that may be removed and then put back on as temperatures fluctuate and after you finish the race to prevent becoming chilled
5. Lip balm and Sunscreen
 6. Petroleum jelly can be applied to areas that tend to chafe, such as between thighs & between arms and chest.
 7. Consider applying petroleum jelly or band-aids to nipples. Nipple irritation and even nipple bleeding are commonly experienced by marathoners due to friction of clothing.
 8. Follow your usual pre-race warm-up and stretching routine

THE RACE

1. Run at your pace. Running beyond your trained limits will lead to early exhaustion and may prevent finishing.
2. Water and sports drinks will be available at aid stations along the course.
 - a. Estimates of how much fluid one should drink during the race must be individualized. It is probably best to stick with the habits that have worked for you during training.
 - b. The most recent recommendations on fluid ingestion during marathon events suggest that one should drink water and sports drink ad lib as determined by your individual thirst.^{3,4}
3. Gels, cookies, and other snacks will be available at aid stations along the course
4. Be particularly aware of traffic hazards, moving vehicles, potholes and other road conditions. Do not assume motorists respect your participation, are aware of your presence, or are paying attention.
5. If you drop out of the race, you must report to an aid station, race official, medical volunteer or police officer. They will notify the proper medical personnel, race officials and family members of your situation. They will assist with transport to an appropriate location, as necessary.
6. Ambulances equipped with paramedics will be available along the racecourse should you need emergency services or transport.

AFTER THE RACE

1. Do not immediately stop moving when you cross the finish line.
 - a. Instead, walk or jog slowly as you move through the finish line chute. This will allow your muscles to cool and your body to acclimate. It is very common for racers who immediately stop upon crossing the finish line to collapse because of the sudden change in activity.
 - b. Continue moving through the finish chute to the finishing area
 - c. Remove your chip, pick up your Mylar blanket and finisher medal at the appropriate areas.
2. Stretch your muscles.
3. A complementary Massage Tent will be available in the finishing area.
4. Have something to eat and drink. Fluids and snacks will be available in the finishing area
5. A Medical Tent First will be available in the finishing area for all race participants who require such services. First aid, warming/cooling blankets, evaluation and treatment for minor injuries and triage for more serious situations will be provided. Individuals deemed to require hospital or emergency room services will be transported by ambulance to University Medical Center (UMC) Hospital. Please report to the medical tent, if needed. The medical tent will be staffed by athletic trainers, nurses, emergency medical personnel, and physicians.
6. The Medical Tent closes 8 hours after race start at 2 pm.
7. Plan with your family to meet at a prearranged location after the race.
8. Stay in the company of others for at least six hours following the race to observe and assist you should medical problems develop.

References

1. <http://www.wunderground.com>
2. *Training Tips, Running Hints, and Other Ideas To Help You Survive A Marathon*, Washington Running Report, Koehler & Koehler, September/October 2003
3. *ACSM 2007 Revised Position Stand on Exercise and Fluid Replacement*, **Medicine & Science In Sports & Exercise**. February 2007, 29(2):377-390
4. *International Marathon Medical Directors Association (IMMDA) Position Statement*, **Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine**. Vol 16(4), July 2006, pp283-292

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