

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WHILE ON POST (continued)



Walking, the father of jogging and the grandfather of running, is that it does not require any technique. Walking is the most natural activity there is. Cardiopulmonary conditioning can be improved. The repeated stimulus of moderate and prolonged exercise such as walking increases the effectiveness and energy reserves of the chordae tendinae. A heart in good condition is added insurance in coping with daily tensions. Cardiopulmonary conditioning through walking also prevents arteriosclerosis. Without being able to explain the phenomenon in detail, I shall nonetheless add that walking can lower the diastolic blood pressure by roughly 10 mm/Hg after only a two-month program.

Two physical phenomena might explain this drop in blood pressure:

increased cardiovascular efficiency and loss of weight. Another benefit of walking is that sugar is metabolized more effectively. Some diabetics who follow a regular fast-walking program even have to reduce the insulin dosage that they would normally inject if they were sedentary.

There are several other beneficial effects attributed to walking. The elimination of excess fat is one (see table below: number of calories burned off by walking). It could also be said that walking improves blood circulation in the legs, tones the leg, thigh and stomach muscles, prevents the loss of bone calcium while protecting the joints and, above all, it allows the body and mind to relax, thereby reducing stress.

Jogging and running

Jogging is the normal outcome of fast walking. The jogger covers from 10 to 12 kilometres an hour whereas a walker does from 5 to 7 kilometres in the same period of time. Jogging has almost the same advantages as walking; the risk of injury is greater, however: blisters, inflammation, pains in the side, muscular stiffness, tendinitis and periostitis and so on. Therefore, before you begin, you should ask for advice from qualified persons in order to avoid the problems on the one hand and, if they arise, to cure them on the other. Muscle exercises are important and the program must be progressive and regular.

Running is an extension of jogging. A runner covers longer distances more quickly than a jogger. He runs 10 kilometres in about 40 minutes and the marathon in 3 hours and 15 minutes or thereabouts.

Here again, the benefits are the same as in walking and jogging, but the danger of injury is also greater; therefore it is important to be in tune with your body. (In such a short article, I shall leave competitive racing aside because it is probably not what most of my readers aspire to, for the moment of course!)

