



**Oxford University Hospitals**  
NHS Foundation Trust

OxSport – Department of Sport and Exercise Medicine

# Return to Running Programme





## What is a Return to Running Programme?

This is a method of gradually re-introducing running and impact activity, to allow your body to strengthen and become accustomed to running again without injuring yourself.

## Why do I need to do a Return to Running Programme?

We recommend doing a Return to Running Programme if you have had time out from running related sport as a result of injury, or if you are taking up running as a new sport.

## When am I ready to start my Return to Running Programme?

You should be pain free when fast walking for 30 minutes before starting the Return to Running Programme.

## How do I do my Return to Running Programme?

The Return to Running Programme is a structured way of gradually increasing the amount of running you are doing from week to week. It is important that you are ready both to step up a level when you complete a week without pain, but also to step down a level if you experience any pain or other symptoms.

## What is the structure of my Return to Running Programme?

**Week 1:** Jog 1 minute then walk 1 minute for a total of 30 minutes. Repeat this every other day.

**Week 2:** Jog 2 minutes then walk 1 minute for a total of 30 minutes. Repeat this every other day.

**Week 3:** Jog 4 minutes then walk 1 minute for a total of 30 minutes. Repeat this every other day.

**Week 4:** Jog 9 minutes then walk 1 minute for a total of 30 minutes. Repeat this every other day.

**Week 5:** Jog 15 minutes then walk 1 minute. Repeat every other day.

**Week 6:** Jog 30 minutes continuously. Repeat every other day.

### **Week 7 onwards:**

You are ready to develop the duration and intensity of your running. We do not recommend increasing the duration or intensity of your sessions by more than 10% per week. For example, if you successfully run for 30 minutes one week, you should run for 33 minutes the next week.

## What if I get pain during my Return to Running Programme?

If you experience a lot of pain during the programme, which does not settle down after reducing the amount of running you are doing, stop running and contact us or your GP. This is particularly important if you have had a stress fracture.

### **General tips for running:**

- Run every other day when returning from an injury, to allow your body to adapt to the impact exercise.
- Have at least one rest day per week.
- If you want to increase your running distance or time, only increase this by 10% each week. Don't increase both in the same week.
- Renew your trainers every 300 to 500 miles. Consider having two pairs of trainers 'on the go' at the same time.
- Vary your training. Combine different speeds, distances and times during your training period. This is called 'cross training' and is a valuable method of reducing injury, by distributing the loads placed upon your body.

## Cross training

Here are some examples of cross training that you may find useful:

- Swimming
- Spin classes
- Pilates
- Circuits
- Gym equipment
- Rowing
- Weight training
- Aerobics
- Alternative sport
- Cycling

## How to contact us

### **Physiotherapy, Horton General Hospital**

Tel: **01295 229 432**

(8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)

### **Physiotherapy, John Radcliffe Hospital**

Tel: **01865 221 540**

(8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)

### **Physiotherapy, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre**

Tel: **01865 741 155**

(8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday - Thursday;  
8.00am to 4.30pm, Friday)

*If you have any problems or questions at any stage throughout your rehabilitation, please speak to your Physiotherapist or Doctor for advice.*

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)

