

# Intervals

*Newsletter of the Frederick Steeplechasers Running Club*  
December 2015

## President's Message

By Lou King

Wow – we had a very successful General Membership Meeting on October 28 at the Delaplaine. 97 people showed up to watch the movies, reminisce about the Steeplechasers over the last 40 years (yes, we were incorporated November 14, 1975), and learn a little bit about club operation and the volunteers who make the club work like a well-oiled machine. Big thanks to **Javier Montenegro** for pulling this together. Next year we're thinking about renting a popcorn machine!

Speaking of the Delaplaine – mark your calendars. The annual running celebration and awards ceremony will be Saturday January 30. This year will be a little different – due to liquor liability insurance reasons this will be a BYOB event. Because the club will not be furnishing the alcohol, we will not need to purchase the (very expensive!) liability insurance. This will help us to keep the event affordable for

everyone. Stay tuned for more details coming from our Social Committee co-chairs **Ruth Taylor** and **Art Gregory**.

Market Street Mile had a banner year. Over \$8800 was earmarked for the Lincoln Panther Running Club Program at Lincoln Elementary School. \$7400 of the Panther fund was used to help pay for the new track around the LES practice field. **Anne Light**, MSM Race Director and head of the Lincoln Panther Running Club program is doing a great job!

Our last race of the year, the Rick O'Donnell 5.22 Mile Trail Race and Ultra-Challenge, was another great success. This race, ably led by race directors **Crista Horn** and **Kerry Shepherd**, was a sell-out in 2015 with over 200 runners registered. Net proceeds of over \$5000 were donated to the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation in Rick's name. Next year we hope to convince Greenbrier State Park to in-

crease the size of the field to 300, relying on our established record of low impact on the trails and the park.

Our three signature races (Women's Distance Festival, Market Street Mile, Rick's Run) netted \$28,269 for charity this year. Wow! But wait, there's more! **David Levine** saw a need and has proposed a new signature race. This race is proposed for the evening of June 18, and will be called the Frederick Summer Solstice Twilight 8K. David is going through the process with the city: getting permits, etc., so this isn't yet a done deal, but I have high hopes he'll be able to pull it off. This race will benefit the Frederick chapter of Blessings in a Backpack. See <http://blessingsinabackpack.org/> for more information about this great cause.

You probably don't realize how much **Luanne Houck** has been doing for the club



Cont. on next page

## Runner Safety Tip: Running in the Dark

With almost all of us running in the dark this time of year, be extra certain to BE SEEN. There are so many ways to be seen by motorists, bicyclists, and other pedestrians. Highly reflective hats, shirts, jackets, shorts and long running pants

are a good idea. Consider running with a headlamp that has a rear indicator light or attach a clip-on flashing light to let others know you are approaching. Bright clothing helps during the daylight hours, but is not seen any better than dark

clothing at night unless there are some built-in reflective features. Lastly, if your clothing isn't reflective, wearing a reflective vest or arm bands with blinking LED lights that can be worn over any clothing is a cost effective way to BE SEEN.

*Be safe  
out there!*

## President's Message, cont.

because a lot of it is behind the scenes, but for the last several years she has been the Membership Chair, Volunteer Appreciation Chair, Communications Chair and has been helping **Mark Lawrence's** Race Support team by providing a premium promotion service. Happily, we will be giving her some additional free time (she says now she'll have time to run!), because **Kerry McHugh** and **Nikki Martin** have agreed to co-chair the Membership Committee, and **Lori Mensh** has agreed to chair the Volunteer Appreciation Committee. Thanks to our new volunteers, and thanks to Luanne for having been the glue which holds this club together!

Did someone say Membership and Volunteer Appreciation? At the time of this writing we have 758 members, of whom 177 volunteered at least once this year (24%). Do you know why we get such a good volunteer turnout – because it's fun! If you haven't volunteered yet, please keep an eye on the Facebook group or periodic mailings "News from the Steeplechasers" for volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers? 21 of you braved a chilly morning at Lock 34 of the C&O Canal to support the amazing runners of the JFK50 Miler. At the Steeplechasers Mile 19 aid station, the runners enjoyed some music, peanut butter and jelly, homemade cookies and a host of other treats. Thanks to all who gave their morning for this.

If you are reading this message in the *Intervals* newsletter (and even if you're not), you should know that we have a new newsletter editor. **Malcolm Senior** has done a great job in this role for many

years, but due to a new job has decided to pass the torch. **Julie Harris** immediately volunteered to take his place – thanks Malcolm, and thanks Julie!

For the Racing Team, applications for calendar year 2016 is opened up through the end of the month – go to <http://steeplechasers.org/competition/racing-team/> for more details. The last team event was Rockville 10k/5k – five of our members ran, all placing or winning their age groups. The team has run in a wide variety of races this fall – to list a few: NYC Marathon, Freedom's Run, Across the Bay 10k, Rockville 10k/5k, and Parks Half (there are many more as someone races every weekend).

The Marathon Training, Half Marathon Training, and Introduction to Trail programs in the fall are complete. There was a lot of positive feedback from participants. Marathon group leaders **Billy Clem** and **Jan Harris** felt like the RRCA Coach Certification training was beneficial, and they'll be able to apply the principles they learned even more in the Spring. We are looking at adding an additional program for shorter distances, so keep an eye on Facebook and your emails for more information.

Hey, you ultra runners – in the coming year there will be a new ultra series, the MD Grand Ultra Series. Awards will be based on participation, not speed. The first race of the series will be in February with the Mid-Maryland 50K. We will pass on more information about the series as soon as all the races are identified.

Did you just join the club this year? New members should watch Facebook and club emails for opportunities to meet other members. These are also posted to the website events calendar. **Jan Harris** sets up our monthly happy hours and **Karen Ochs** will be starting up the breakfast runs soon. Breakfast runs are most Saturdays through the winter -- the host provides running routes of usually 3, 6, 9 miles, and the guests bring some food to share for after the run. These are great opportunities to get to know the other members.

Well, that's all for now – I hope to see you around town soon.

Lou King  
[president@steeplechasers.org](mailto:president@steeplechasers.org)



## FSRC—2015 Officers and Committee Chairs

**President**—Lou King

**Vice President**—Javier Montenegro

**Secretary**—Sage Norton

**Treasurer**—Harriet Langlois

**Social**—Ruth Taylor and  
Art Gregory

**Communications**—Luanne Houck

**Membership**—Kerry McHugh &  
Nikki Martin

**Competition**—Cassy Crouse and  
Chad Ahalt

**Race Support**—Tim O'Keefe and  
Mark Lawrence

**Training and Education**—Javier  
Montenegro

**Technology**—Lou King

**Tender Loving Care (TLC)** - Joanne  
Hawelka

**Newsletter**—Julie Harris

**Volunteer Appreciation**—Lori  
Mensch

# Is It Ever Okay to Race With Someone Else's Bib Number?

By Amanda Macmillan from Runner's World (reprinted w/permission)

When Italian runner Gianclaudio Marengo became separated from his group after this month's New York City Marathon, he rode the subway for two days before being found. Among the many odd details of his story was the fact that he'd run the marathon wearing a bib registered to someone else—an injured teammate who'd given Marengo the opportunity to take his place.

The problem is, using another person's entry is prohibited in most races, including New York City. And once Marengo made headlines, his secret was out: His results were invalidated, and he and his teammate [could be banned](#) from future marathons. Race officials have since touted this as an example of why bib swapping can be dangerous: Marengo's name wasn't registered as having run the race, adding to the confusion when he was reported missing.

Marengo's certainly not the only person who's ever raced with someone else's bib. It's just that most people never get caught; as long as they're not setting course records or sparking a citywide manhunt, they don't attract the attention that might warrant a close look at their results. But just because runners can get away with bib swapping, does that mean they should? We took a look at common reasons for this practice, its potential consequences, and whether it's really so bad.

## WHY WEAR SOMEONE ELSE'S BIB?

On rare occasions, bibs are swapped with the intention of deliberate cheating: A registered participant recruits a faster runner to race in his place and win him an age-group award or an entry into the [Boston Marathon](#), for example. Usually, though, the practice is less malicious: A runner gets injured, decides to leave town, or simply doesn't feel prepared for the race, so he gives his bib to someone else.

This is more common for sold-out races, when aspiring runners can't enter under their own names. Sometimes bibs are handed over for free, but often, registered runners sell them to recoup registration costs—or even make a profit.

## WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

**Safety** is the biggest concern about bib swapping for [race directors](#). If a runner gets hurt on the course and cannot respond to medical attention, his or her race bib should be linked to a name and emergency contact information. “We've had a runner end up in the hospital while wearing somebody else's number, so we contacted the wrong next of kin and it really created a panic,” said Patrice Matamoros, director of the Pittsburgh Marathon. (To combat this problem, Pittsburgh is one of a few races that now offer legal bib transfers.) Race entries can also include information about allergies or medical conditions. “If someone indicated that they have diabetes but the person wearing their bib doesn't have diabetes, that's really a concern for us and for the doctors who are treating them,” she said.

**Other people's safety** could be in jeopardy as well, in rare cases. Les Smith, director of the Portland Marathon, recalls one year when race officials received a phone call from the babysitter of a child whose mother was supposedly running the marathon. The child had fallen and needed emergency surgery, requiring a parent's consent. “Our crew on the course spotted the number,” he said. “But when this person was stopped, it turned out not to be the mother; this person had done a blind purchase of the bib on Craigslist or eBay.” (To this day, he has no idea why the mother lied about running the race or where she really was during that time.)

**Skewed results** are a problem when runners swap bibs. A man who runs wearing a bib registered to his wife or his father, for example, may accidentally win an age group he doesn't belong in, bumping out another runner who actually earned it.

**Your online racing reputation** can suffer if you give your bib to a slower runner. With the introduction of race result aggregators like [Athlinks.com](#), people who hand over their bibs



must be comfortable with having someone else's race results linked to their names indefinitely.

**Don't forget insurance claims.** If you can't run because you're sick or injured, bib swapping could cost you when making claims: Smith said he's received subpoenas for marathon records of people filing for disability who are supposedly not well enough to work.

## BUT SOMEONE PAID FOR THIS BIB. SHOULDN'T IT GO TO GOOD USE?

Your entry fee entitles you to a shirt, a medal, and access to aid stations and food during and after the race. And it's true that if you don't run, you probably won't get any of those things.

In this sense, the act of bib swapping feels similar to ticket scalping or sharing music files, said Shawn E. Klein, blogger at [SportsEthicist.com](#) and philosophy instructor at Arizona State University.

“Since no one is apparently harmed, there is a sense that it is not serious,” he said. “If no one bought tickets from scalpers or resellers, then the tickets just go to waste and we miss out on events. If we buy them, no one is hurt and we get to go to the event; it's a win-win.”

But in most cases, race entries (and the perks that come with them) are meant to be non-transferrable—and those bibs contain personal information that concert tickets and music files don't. That's the bottom line, said Klein: When you check the box on your race entry that says you understand the rules, you are agreeing to this stipulation, the same way you would when buying an airline ticket.

Cont. on next page

## Race With Someone Else's Bib Number? (cont.)

Also, Smith points out that races rely on a certain percentage of no-shows to keep entry costs down. “No event orders a shirt or medal for everyone who has registered,” he said. “There is a real science to this process ... formulas, truisms as to who will not show.” The more people who run with bibs that would otherwise go unused, the more skewed this formula becomes, and back-of-the-packers could end up without the swag they paid to receive.

### AT LEAST I'M NOT A BANDIT, RIGHT?

In the running community, using someone else's bib usually isn't looked down upon as much as banditing—running a race with no bib at all. Bandits, after all, use race resources that *no one* paid for. They make already full streets even more crowded, adding extra runners to the mix, rather than taking the place of runners who chose not to be there.

Many races take serious steps, like employing “bandit catchers” on the course, to prevent bibless runners from crossing the finish line. After this year's Baltimore Marathon, race directors posted a photo of two bandits, attempting to shame them into taking responsibility for their wrongdoing. It worked: The runners came forward, made a donation to charity, and their photo was removed.

Still, using someone else's entry doesn't mean you belong on the course. You may get fewer dirty looks from fellow racers if you're wearing an official bib—and you may feel less guilt while you chug Gatorade at the aid stations—but don't tell yourself that what you're doing is right.

### SO HOW BAD IS IT, REALLY?

From an ethical standpoint, bib swapping seems like a classic gray area, said Klein. “On one hand, it is the violation of a rule and of an agreed to contract with the race organizer,” he said. “On the other hand, it seems, to many, harmless: It doesn't seem to impart a competitive advantage or disadvantage to anyone else running the race.”

But the “no one gets hurt” argument assumes that the illegal runner won't skew the race standings or need medical attention on the course—neither of which the swapper or swappee can be sure of. Plus, said Klein, the rules shouldn't be ignored. “One has to be careful with such slippery slope arguments,” he said, “but I think there is something to the idea that the willingness to violate unimportant rules now can influence the willingness to violate important rules later on.”

Overall, Klein concludes that “runners should probably not engage in bib swapping in races where such swapping is forbidden.” To Smith—who's also an attorney—the answer is even simpler: “Using a number not assigned to you is dead wrong.” In fact, he said, it's a form of fraud and false impersonation, and could potentially be punishable under state law. “Today it is like using someone else's ID or health record.”

### IF SWAPPING IS SO BAD, WHY DON'T MORE RACES OFFER OFFICIAL TRANSFER PROGRAMS?

“Some races allow bib transfers to another person, or from one distance to another, but those types of transfers use up race resources,” Smith said. Small race staffs with small budgets may not be able to manage official transfers without bringing on additional employees. Matamoros said that the \$15 fee the Pittsburgh Marathon charges for transfers goes toward paying the person they hired to handle the transfers.

### SO WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I CAN'T RUN?

Check your race's policy on refunds and bib transfers. Many will let you defer a guaranteed entry to the following year, although for some, like New York City, you'll have to pay a second time.



PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN HULVAT

Others may be more forgiving: The North Face Endurance Challenge series allows transfers to future races in other locations, or to different race distances, for a fee. Some obstacle-course or multi-sport series, like Ironman and Spartan Race events, have similar transfer policies.

Some races, like the Pittsburgh Marathon and the Marine Corps Marathon, now offer official bib transfers. This ensures that wannabe runners can still get into sold-out races, and those who can't run have a legal way out. Swapped runners get a new bib with their own name and number, and are put in the appropriate corral for their pace.

For future events, consider purchasing [race insurance](#) if it's available. Active.com, the largest race registration platform, offers its “Registration Protector” policy for \$7 per entry. This may qualify you for a refund in the event of personal injury or illness, transportation problems, job loss, jury duty, and a few other circumstances.

Unfortunately, forgetting to train is not one of them. Aside from these loopholes, there may not be much you can (legally) do once you've committed to a race entry.

But look at the bright side: You can always go to packet pickup and take home a T-shirt. Of course, whether you wear it is another ethical quandary in itself.

## What's being said about the Half & Full Marathon Training Groups?

By several different participants

**Nikki Martin**—Participating in the Fall 2015 Half Marathon Training Group was such a rewarding experience for me. I also ran with the Spring 2015 Half Marathon Training Group, and can tell you both Javier Montenegro and Billy Clem do an excellent job of finding different ways to make the training runs interesting and challenging and also making the group more cohesive. Both groups catered to all levels of running and the encouragement we got from the coaches and from each other was really an inspiration to keep moving towards our goals.

**Tina Cole**— I trained with Javier's Half Marathon Group. Even though we complained about the eight miles of hills, it was all worth it. I'm a stronger runner because of the training and guidance.

My training was for the Army 10 Miller. I had a great time and will sign-up again next year. I shaved several minutes off of my time because of the other inspiring runners. There were a few runners that stood out more than others. At about mile 8.5, I wanted to

**Dave Snipes**— I trained for the full marathon, specifically the Marine Corp. Marathon (MCM). What I liked about the MCM as a first timer: Very supportive crowd and relatively flat course with lots of sites.

It's at the perfect time of year when it's not too cold and not too hot. Weather makes a huge difference in race results!

I registered for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Half Marathon and that was my goal race for the fall season. That race ended up being cancelled because of weather and there was no refund. Luckily, other races stepped up and offered discounts to us "displaced" runners, and I signed up for the Freedom's Run Half Marathon and for the one in Gettysburg too. The Freedom's Run Half is an awesome race- plenty of substantial hills, but our training prepared us well for them and they weren't quite as daunting on race day (not that I necessarily "tackled" all the hills like I would have liked to, but I survived and continued on!).

take a break and walk—until I saw a wounded veteran.

I saw something shining in the sunlight and I simply could not comprehend what I was seeing. Then I realized it was the runner's prosthetic legs and he was still running. Needless to say, I could not take a break—I kept going.

Then, I followed two older marines who were chanting and it helped me keep a good pace.

As for tips for folks who are interested in running it in the future: Arrive early to get through security and get settled before the start.

Maintain your expected pace and avoid jockeying for position early on, as the field is packed with new and unexperienced runners, some of whom will stop dead in front of you to walk while others are ducking and dodging trying to make up time because the Metro was packed.

Gettysburg was another beautiful race- very small, low-key and only a few, very doable hills.

I supposed a simple testament to the awesome training coaches we have in this organization is just the fact that I was confident enough to sign up for two half marathons in one season. For anyone who has not participated in a training program, I highly encourage you to sign up this year. Running with a group on fantastic people has done wonders for my running and I've made some really great friends too!

It was an inspiring race with inspiring runners and I'm so thankful to have had the opportunity to run for wounded warriors.

Thank you!



Overall, the MCM is a great race and training with the group is even better.



## Some fun photo shots of the half and full marathon groups!



If you think this looks fun— make sure to look out for announcements of the Spring Training Groups!



8/2/16  
FRESHER  
SPEEDCHASERS  
RUNNING CLUB  
MARATHON TRAINING  
WATER SUPPLY  
HAVE A HEART- PLEASE  
DON'T TACKLE, TAMPER, OR  
VANDALIZE.  
THANK YOU  
FORGETTING TO  
CHECK!

## Terry Burk/Sam Case Memorial 5K

By Malcolm Senior - FSRC Member



Saturday November 14, 2015 choice of races today Stone Mill 50 mile or the Terry Burk/Sam Case Memorial 5K - 21 minutes versus 10 hours, let me think about this for a minute. On this crisp fall morning found me less than a mile from home signing up for the Westminster Road Running Club (WRRRC) Terry

Burke / Sam Case Memorial 5K which honors the memory of two long time friends and WRRRC runners. As she did in 2014, Lauren Case provided pre-race comments from the Case family. Susan Case served as the race's honorary starter.

A net downhill course that begins and uses the Wakefield Valley Trail then winds through the neighborhoods. A tough couple of uphill's with a gradual downhill and then flat finish.

This was a regular WRRRC race. \$2 for members and \$4 for non-members, a goody bag for all runners. This year's Burk/Case 5k had 110 finishers with runner ages ranging from 3 – 84, medals



for finishers and awards 1<sup>st</sup> 3 male and female and awards one deep in 10 year age group. Finished 7<sup>th</sup> in a time of 21:05, good to see other Steeps members – John Way & James Moreland

## The Connection Between Nutrition and Running

By Katelyn Laflin, member

I use to think that because I worked out I could eat whatever I wanted. The truth is, as athletes we need to be all the more careful about what we eat and here's why. There is a process going on inside our bodies called oxidative stress which is, "an imbalance between the production of free radicals and the ability of the body to counteract or detoxify their harmful effects." This happens on a daily basis, whether we workout or not, through the air we breath and many times we do not even see the harmful effects it can have on us until it is too late.

When we workout, it actually increases the oxidative stress happening in our bodies allowing athletes to see more evidences of the negative effects. Some of the signs of oxidative stress are, muscle damage, tendon injuries, increased infections, loss of muscle power, and damage to your heart muscle. This can explain why after you have been training for a race or right after a competition you are more prone to get sick or may notice a few days later soreness in your muscles.

Many people attribute that to simply being an athlete but the research shows that these are directly related to oxidative stress in our body. The only way to combat oxidative stress is through antioxidants which are found in fruits and vegetables. The current recommendation for the average person is to consume 7-13 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, with athletes needing 16-18 servings! What do they consider an athlete- anyone who does 60-90 minutes of regular activity on a daily basis. What is considered a serving -portion the size of your fist. With that in mind, think about what you ate yesterday. How many servings did you get?

Many people struggle to get the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables into their diets daily. The most common answer in this situation is to turn to vitamins to "help". We now know though that synthetic man made vitamins are not the answer and that your body does not recognize them and therefore does not absorb the nutrients they were designed to give.

So what is the solution? Well as I mentioned I was not always a health conscious athlete. I always thought I was health because I ate a salad occasionally and I worked out when it was convenient but I constantly felt run down and always seemed to be on the verge of getting sick. About a year ago a friend of mine introduced me to a way to flood my body with 30 fruits and vegetables daily! I was so impressed because not only was it so simple but it is third party certified and back by 32 peer reviewed clinical research studies! I have such a peace of mind now knowing that my husband and I are getting the nutrition that we need on a daily basis and all it took was one simple change, adding in healthy smoothies to get more fruits and vegetables into my diet. Daily smoothies and a daily focus on my nutrition has improved my running.

As athletes we not only need to be conscious of how we train and what we do, but even more importantly we need to fuel our bodies for success.

## Racing Team Results

The Steeplechasers Racing team brings visibility of FSRC to the local running scene and promotes competitive distance running among the club. To read more information, please go to <http://steeplechasers.org/competition/racing-team/>

Date	Race	Athlete/Results
11/8/2015	Across the Bay 10k	Chris VanSant: 38:13 (3rd AG)
11/1/2015	Rockville 10k	Sage Norton: 38:00 (1st), Malcom Senior: 43:12 (1st AG), Keary Johnston, Harriet Langlois
10/24/2015	Spook Hill 4 Mile Run	Steve Dobson: 26:58 (2nd AG)
10/11/2015	Steamtown Marathon	Chris VanSant: 3:19:22
10/10/2015	Freedom's Run Marathon	Shannon Matthews: 3:20:02 (2nd); Lorraine Sullivan: 3:59:05 (3rd AG)
10/3/2015	New Hampshire Half-Marathon	Harriet Longlois 1:58:47

## Brag Corner

The Steeplechasers want to encourage self-recognition for a job well done. Setting and reaching a goal is a big part of being a successful runner.

If you've recently completed a running goal, like your first 5k or the longest run ever, or even your best run ever—share it with the team. Go to the [Brag Corner on the Steeplechasers website](#) to share the details. In the meantime, here are some recent goals from fellow-club members.

Name	Event Date	Brag!
Meaghan Vance	11/26/2015	PRd by 1 min 46 seconds for a 5k for a time of 23:10
Michelle Mitchell	11/22/2015	Finished my 1st JFK 50 in 12:35 minutes. Feeling great!
Brenda Jacobs	11/21/2015	Finished my first JFK 50 in 10:40:37! It was a great day!
meaghan vance	10/25/2015	PR'ed by 22 minutes this year at the Marine Corps Marathon!
Meaghan Vance	6/6/2015	Set a 10 Miler PR at the Baltimore 10 miler! 1:29:47
Ali Bierly	5/25/2015	26:28 at the Parkway Panda 5k... Best 5k time since I started running again!
Luanne Houck	5/9/2015	Ran Running with the Cows half marathon in Kansas which completes my
Ali Bierly	5/3/2015	PR'd by almost 15 minutes at the Frederick half! Next stop, breaking 2h!
Robbie Blaylock	5/3/2015	Ran my first half (Frederick Half) at a time of 2:26.
Kathy Turk	5/3/2015	Ran 5K beside my daughter, brain cancer survivor + my inspiration to run
Mike Armogida	5/3/2015	PR'd and broke 2hr for first time in a half marathon!
Mike Geisler	4/25/2015	Ran a 19:45 NMES 5K. I set a goal to break 20 minutes a few years
Michelle Mitchell	3/28/2015	Finished my 1st 50K at Seneca Valley in 7:18.



## Race Recommendations

Did you run a race and have some valuable tips to share with your fellow runners? Have recommendations for an upcoming race that you've run before and have recommendations for? Sharing your thoughts and experiences can help other runners feel less intimidated for their upcoming race!

Please send your recommendations to [newsletter@steeplechasers.org](mailto:newsletter@steeplechasers.org)

### Baltimore Half & Full Race Recommendations:

Collected from team members

- Get there early. In some years, some runners have missed the start of the race due to poor traffic control, lack of parking, and lack of restrooms.
- Leave Frederick at least two hours before start time. You can park on Pratt St. near where it crosses MLK. Sometimes it's hard to find a spot but it's easier than getting in and out of the race parking lots.
- Take the Lightrail—parking at North Linthicum station—trains run every 10 minutes and it takes about 15 minutes to get to Camden Yards from N. Linthicum.

## Race Photos

We love when you share your race experiences through your photos with the team! Send photos from your race to [newsletter@steeplechasers.org](mailto:newsletter@steeplechasers.org)



# Stomach Woes Stopping Your Workout Short of the Goal?

By Julie Harris, member

Interrupting a run or a workout to rush to the bathroom can be one of the most embarrassing and annoying moments for anyone during exercise. Unfortunately, gastrointestinal issues (GI) can be a major barrier to reaching your goals, and can hinder motivation and long-term adherence to any exercise plan.

## Common GI Symptoms

GI symptoms that are common complaints during runs include:

- nausea
- heartburn
- diarrhea
- stomach cramps



As much as 50% of the general population reports GI issues during prolonged exercise. Symptoms are affected by factors such as the mode, duration, or intensity of exercise, your age, and especially dietary intake. You can help mitigate GI symptoms by carefully designing your exercise program.

## What Causes GI Issues?

Researchers continue to examine and study the effect and influence that exercise has on the GI tract to try to better understand the biological causes. Understanding the physiological changes in the body during exercise can help identify ways to manage symptoms. GI symptoms during exercise typically are a result of maldigestion, malabsorption, and improper food and fluid intake.

## Managing GI Symptoms During Runs

These biomechanical changes occur naturally with exercise but there are ways to decrease risk of developing symptoms. Here are some tactics to help you manage exercise-related GI symptoms:

1. Several studies have demonstrated that blood flow to the GI tract is inversely related to the intensity of exercise. These studies have demonstrate that since VO<sub>2</sub>max improves with training, GI symptoms will also decrease with training. If you are new to exercising and are experiencing frequent GI symptoms, train at a lower VO<sub>2</sub>max for a longer period of time. Slowly adding exercise your day to day routine should decrease bouts of GI symptoms.
2. Strenuous exercise may induce GI symptoms. Remember that physical activity performed at a lower intensity has been shown to have protec-

tive effects on the GI tract, can decrease risks of GI diseases, and can increase long-term health. Staying in lower intensity can be very beneficial, increase enjoyment, and adherence to your running program.

3. Stay hydrated. If the exercise program is less than an hour, drink water. For longer durations, you can add sports drinks - but since these can be a source of GI issues, slowly add these into routines and track which drinks increase discomfort.
4. Keep a food log to pinpoint food culprits for any GI issues- track the amount eaten, symptoms right after intake, and any issues during exercise. Since everyone's digestive system empties at a different rate, it's also important to look at how quickly food moves through the intestines, which can vary between one to three days. A simple way to learn your personal rate of digestion is to eat sesame seeds, corn or beets; or in other words, foods that can be seen in feces. Once you know this piece of information, you can use it to create a better diet before exercise, avoiding foods that take longer to digest. This can be particularly helpful before a big exercise event, such as a race or high-intensity workout day.

*Newsletter of the  
Frederick Steeplechasers  
Running Club  
December 2015*



.....

If you have an interesting story, quote, race recommendation, photo, or anything you're willing to share for the newsletter—please send to [newsletter@steeplechasers.org](mailto:newsletter@steeplechasers.org)

.....

