

## Return to Running Program—Post-Operative

**Purpose:** This program is intended for those individuals who have been off running for an extended period of time due to an injury or surgery. Please discuss with your therapist specific modifications to this program depending on the circumstances leading up to your return to running.

**Guidelines:** The following guidelines need to be followed to ensure an optimal outcome of the progressive running program.

1. For the first four weeks, run every other day for the time allotted. If allowed, it is okay to cross-train with other forms of cardio activities. (e.g., elliptical trainer; stationary bike) after your run or on specified "OFF" days.
2. Complete warm-up and cool-down exercises as prescribed.
3. Run up to, but not into your "pain zone."
4. Use ice as needed (10 mins.) to decrease post-exercise tissue irritation.
5. Not allowed to progress to next allotted time if symptoms occur while running or you are limping.
6. Don't forget your prescribed strength training exercises on "OFF" days.

**Warm-up:** A five to 10 minute period of light cardiovascular activity (e.g., bike, walking, elliptical trainer, etc.) is needed to sufficiently warm-up the tissues for running or stretching. Your physical therapist will provide you with a list of appropriate stretches. They should be done in a controlled, low-load, prolonged manner that does NOT cause pain. For static stretching, hold the position for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times. For dynamic stretching, follow the instructions provided by your physical therapist.

Actual Day:							
Week #1	5 mins.	OFF/CT	5 mins.	OFF/CT	7.5 mins.	OFF/CT	7.5 mins.
Week #2	OFF/CT	10 mins.	OFF/CT	10 mins.	OFF/CT	12.5 mins.	OFF/CT
Week #3	12.5 mins.	OFF/CT	15 mins.	OFF/CT	15 mins.	OFF/CT	17.5 mins.
Week #4	OFF/CT	17.5 mins.	OFF/CT	20 mins.	OFF/CT	20 mins.	OFF/CT
Week #5	10 mins.	20 mins.	OFF/CT	10 mins.	20 mins.	OFF/CT	15 mins.
Week #6	20 mins.	OFF/CT	15 mins.	20 mins.	OFF/CT	15 mins.	25 mins.
Week #7	OFF/CT	15 mins.	25 mins.	OFF/CT	20 mins.	25 mins.	OFF/CT
Week #8	20 mins.	25 mins.	OFF/CT	20 mins.	30 mins.	OFF/CT	**

\* CT = Cross Training

\*\* After reaching 30 minutes of continuous running, begin to estimate the mileage you completed in that time and progress your distance by a total of 10-15 percent/per week.  
 Example: 30 minutes @ 7:30 min/mile pace = 4.0 miles

$$4.0 \text{ miles} \times 10\% = 0.4 \text{ miles}$$

$$4.0 \text{ miles} \times 15\% = 0.6 \text{ miles}$$

Therefore, increase each training run by 0.4-0.6 miles

**Cool Down:** Complete your stretching/strengthening program as recommended by your physical therapist or continue with additional cross-training activities. Ice as needed following your runs for mild pain/soreness (10 minutes).