

## How to Stay Injured: A 20 Point Plan

By Heather Macdonald

For all you fanatics who want to keep running no matter what your body is telling you, here's my new 20 point plan to keep your injury "topped up". To help you remember the concepts, I am introducing a new acronym; just replace RICE with DUPE! You may want to use the checklist provided to total your own score (but then again, you are an independent thinker and may choose to ignore the scoring altogether).

1. Run through it. What's a little pain now and then?
2. Don't listen to your body. That searing pain beside your knee is probably temporary. And for goodness sake, don't pay attention to your heart rate monitor. How can you take a toy seriously? You don't want to stop running, so don't.
3. Avoid a professional opinion. Leave it till it's really bad. Why go to those professionals anyway? They just want your money even though they use fancy smancy words like biomechanics, acute, chronic and ITB. Someone once told you what RICE stood for, but you've forgotten.
4. Keep quiet about it. Don't tell your coach or training coordinator. You know how picky they get when they hear about problems. Besides, it will probably go away.
5. Get comfy on the couch rather than do those exercises that your sports doctor gave you. You can lie about it when you go to your next visit.
6. Don't stretch after your runs, and avoid drills too. They take up too much time.
7. Water and fuel are highly overrated. Don't worry about replacing your bodily fluids and electrolytes or taking in energy sources because you are special. Who wants to carry that weight? You missed the talk about getting rid of the jiggle in the hydration pack and now you are too embarrassed to ask.
8. After the run, eat whatever you want and large quantities of it. Don't worry about replacing the nutrients you need or balancing carbs, fats and proteins. And those "recovery" drinks just cost too much even though the powder lasts a long time.
9. Tape it up! If your ankle gets swollen after every run, just tape it before the run and you can keep going. No one will notice when it's under your socks.
10. Missed some runs due to sickness or vacation? No problem, just jump back in where you left off. The schedule shows 10 miles, so do 10 miles. You don't want to cut back because you may get behind.
11. You paid for that race, so you better do it even though your knee gives out on the downhill. So what if they have to carry you out on a stretcher and you need rehab for 6 months? You've got medical coverage, right?
12. Buy shoes cheaply and don't replace them regularly. That shoe hype is just marketing; how can they claim that your shoes are the most important gear? Besides, you are getting used to running with plantar fasciitis, and you want to make those shoes last another year despite the 100s of miles you have put on them.
13. Increase your distance dramatically. You felt great last week, so add another whopper this week.
14. Cross training is a fad invented by the sports industry. You don't need to improve your core or use other muscles because you want to focus on your legs! You are a runner, not a weight lifter. Even though pool running is a substitute, it involves going to the community centre, getting changed, having a shower, swimming around with other people; that's too much effort.
15. Do every training run as if it's a race. Why should you slow down and let someone pass you? And how will you truly know your race pace if you don't speed up now?
16. It only hurts when you (pick one or more from the list): start running, stop running, start walking, go uphill, go downhill, run flats, and mostly two days after. So, if it only hurts at those times, you must be okay to keep going.
17. Avoid a cold water soak in the stream after a long run. Your feet get too cold even though your muscles may appreciate the treatment.
18. Who needs recovery after a race? Let your post race euphoria drive your impulsiveness! So what if you've been training every week for 6 months; your body can take it. Rest is for cats, not runners.
19. Take drugs to keep going, before, during and after your runs. Why should you run in pain?
20. Be right! You are the one who is most intimately aware of your body and what it can do. You have been running long enough to know your own strengths. If you just keep going, you will reach that goal no matter what the price. Run whatever you want despite your program; how about 7 days a week or none. Take pride in your stubbornness.

## **A New Acronym for Runners in Denial: DUPE**

Runners in denial, take hope. Here's your new acronym so you can remember what to do while injured. (Tip: RICE stands for Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation.)

- D** Deny the injury.
- U** Upset your body.
- P** Persist in running.
- E** Endure the pain!

## **Scoring**

This subjective scoring system was derived from years of observing and training trail and road runners.

	<b>Quadrant</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>15-20</b>	Overachiever	Congrats! You are at the pinnacle of your injury career.
<b>10-15</b>	Competitor	You are a role model for others in denial.
<b>6-10</b>	Groupie	Needs some work here. Stop socializing and run 7 days a week.
<b>1-5</b>	Greenhorn	One step at a time and you'll reach Groupie status soon.
<b>0</b>	Underachiever	Too bad. You probably don't even have an injury.

## **Follow Up**

Send your personal score to heather at mountainmadness.ca (substitute @). Include your justification or whiney rhetoric.