

**TO HAVE A FIT,
HAPPY AND
HEALTHY RUN**



RESPECT THE CHALLENGE

WITH  **Simplyhealth**

WELCOME to your Runners' Guide. Over the next few pages you will find a wealth of information about the run-up to the event and the big day itself that will help your run go more smoothly.

Running is great for your health, but it's important to read the following information to make sure you are ready to take part:

Make sure you are healthy enough to train for your run. Talk to your doctor if you have any long-term health conditions or any health concerns.

See your doctor if you feel unwell at any time in your training, but especially if you experience heart palpitations, light-headedness or dizziness, chest pain or tightness, shortness of breath, excessive wheezing or severe joint and muscle pain.

Seek advice about resuming training after a bout of flu or gastroenteritis.



HYDRATION

Make sure you stay well-hydrated. In the weeks leading up to the event, the colour of your urine is a useful indicator of hydration. Generally, dark urine suggests you are dehydrated (although nutritional supplements can also alter urine colour), with pale straw-coloured water being ideal.

Alcoholic drinks are dehydrating, so avoid them in the 24 hours before you



run. During a run, drink when you need to. Don't gulp large volumes of fluids if you

are not thirsty – doing so can result in a condition called hyponatraemia in which your body salts become diluted, possibly causing confusion and vomiting.

Make sure you know where the drink stations are on the run's route. Aqua Pura Water will be available, but only take a drink if you need one.

There will also be a shower on the course.

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TOP TIPS

IN THE WEEK BEFORE YOUR RUN, WE'LL SEND YOU A FINAL EMAIL WITH LAST-MINUTE ADVICE AND THE LATEST WEATHER FORECAST TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHICH CLOTHES YOU'LL NEED

1

Never wear new trainers for the first time on the big day. Ideally, you should have run in your shoes for around a month beforehand.

2

You might want to bring along some old clothes to wear while standing on the start line. Once you start the run, you can throw them away.

3

Don't forget to bring your own safety pins to fasten on your run number.

4

Remember to apply Vaseline to any areas where you have had chafing during training – that might include the groin, under your arms, the bra band or toes.

5

Wear weather resistant suncream, but not too much – you don't want it running into your eyes as you sweat.

FIT TO RUN?

Don't run if you feel unwell or have been ill recently. Running can put you at risk of serious illness if you have been vomiting, felt dizzy or had chest pains.

Don't be tempted to start just because you have collected sponsors to raise money for charity. You can attempt another run in the future.

If you decide not to take part in the Birmingham International Marathon, you will be able to defer your place until next year. For more information, please visit greatrun.org/defer.

As a guide, during the weeks before the Birmingham International Marathon takes place you should aim to have run between 17 and 20 miles continuously in training to be properly prepared for the 26.2-mile distance.

For the Simplyhealth Great Birmingham Run you should aim to have run eight miles continuously in training to be prepared for the 13.1-mile distance. If you can't manage this, you may not enjoy it or complete it



safely, so please don't run this time.

Remember to fill in the requested information on the back of your run number – including contact numbers for the day of the event. You must run with your own number, nobody else's. Don't let anyone else use it if you decide not to take part.

NUTRITION

Stick to a healthy, balanced diet during training. In the week before your run, don't

try any new foods and drinks as it may affect your digestion.

ON THE DAY

The first few miles of the run can be very crowded. Many people tire themselves out by dodging in and out of runners because they are behind on their personal run plans. Try to maintain a steady, even pace – enjoy the event.

After the run, collect your bag as soon as you can. Put on some warm, dry clothing and don't get cold.

Some runners don't drink enough when they are running and need to rehydrate afterwards, so make sure you take a drink as soon as you can after crossing the finish line. Make sure you are fully hydrated with water or squash before consuming any alcohol.

Try to eat some starchy foods within two hours of finishing the event – your muscles can replace energy (in the form of glycogen) most efficiently during this post-run window.