

If you're thinking of pounding the pavement this summer, remember you only need one – although crucial – piece of equipment to go jogging: a proper pair of running shoes.

Dr. David Price, sports medicine expert, said selecting running shoes is an important step to avoid injuries.

Listen to your body and look at your shoes before injury strikes. If you just can't tell if your shoe is well worn, go try on a new pair of shoes to feel the difference.

Buying running shoes is individualized. You need the right fit, the right size for your feet. Get your gait checked to know your foot strike pattern. Does your foot roll in? Do you have low arches? Then you may need motion control or a stability shoe. Does your foot roll out? High arches? You could need a cushioned shoe. You also may need two pairs of shoes. If you run daily, rotate your shoes.

Now that you have the best shoes for you, Dr. Price shares other important tips on how to prevent common running injuries.

TRAINING

It starts with proper training, says this Carolina HealthCare sports medicine expert, especially for beginner runners. Being mentally and physically prepared will help ensure long-term success.

- Increase your distance and speed gradually. Only 10 percent per week.
- Intermix hard days with easy days.
- Drop back a small amount every third week.
- Rest. Take a day or two off per week.

STRETCHING

Dr. Price also shares these tips about stretching.

- Stretching before running has not been shown to prevent injury.
- Warm up for 10-12 minutes before stretching.
- Cool down at the end of your run when your muscles are warmed up.

INJURY

But sometimes, runners get injured. Dr. Price suggests the following treatment options.

- Ice it.
- Use anti-inflammatory medicines for the short term (1-2 weeks).
- Alter training schedule like adding more rest days or decreasing speed and distance.
- Change what you run on -- treadmill vs. road.
- Be sure to cross train.
- Rehab all injuries. Wear a brace or tape it.
- Above all else, listen to your body.
- If the pain persists, see a doctor.

LEARN MORE

Dr. Price will talk more about running injury prevention and answer your questions at a June 4 community seminar. This free educational event is from 6-7:30 p.m. at CMC-Mercy Auditorium. For details or to RSVP, call 704-304-5192 by May 31.