



Running Without Strength

Strength Training In an Endurance Environment

By Craig DeLeon

When you think of training for a marathon, the last thing on your mind is resistance training. With all of the time that is needed to dedicate to training, where would it fit in, plus the common misconception is that lifting weights will “bulk” you up. This “bulk up” will slow you down and make training harder than ever, right?

Wrong. There is numerous health benefits that can actually increase your performance come race day. Finding a balance between your training and strength training is the key and does not involve heavy or intense training. The key is to be as efficient as possible, with both types of training.

Building muscle has a trickle down effect that will dramatically impact your performance when it comes to running. Keep these concepts in mind the next time you hear you should not incorporate strength training into your marathon training.

1. Strength training builds muscle: One pound of lean mass burns 4-7 calories per pound per day. Fat on the hand burns 0 calories! This increase in muscle makes you leaner and more efficient at burning calories at rest.
2. Injury prevention: One aspect of joint stability is surrounding muscle strength. The stronger a muscle is surrounding a particular joint, lets say the knee, the less likely you may incur a repetitive stress injury.
3. Increase in endurance: It has been shown that runners who incorporate strength training into their weekly routine have increased leg strength and endurance. Obviously a runner who has increased endurance will be a better runner!

The Detroit Medical Center is the Official Healthcare Provider of the Detroit Free Press Marathon.

There are some simple exercises that you can incorporate into your training. Try this routine by starting out with a once a week ratio, building up to three times per week. Keep in mind that your intensity level should be consistent. For most exercises, your body weight is sufficient enough (squats, lunges), otherwise, find a resistance that is challenging.

Squats: 2-3 sets 12-15 reps

Remember to keep your feet shoulder width apart keeping your weight centered in your mid-foot to heel. Keeping your abdominals tucked, begin to bend your knees, keeping your back straight until you are near a 90 degree angle at the knee. Return to starting position.

Lunges: 2-3 sets 8-10 reps

Begin standing with your feet directly underneath you. Take one step to your left, bending that knee, while extending your right knee. Push thru your left knee back to a standing position. Repeat 8-10 times and repeat on other leg.

Lying Bridge: 3-4 sets 20-30 second holds

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Begin by pushing thru your feet raising your hips off of the floor. Contract your hamstring (back of leg) and glute (rear end) muscles while also contracting your abdominals.

Wood Chop: 2 sets 15 reps

Begin in a squat position. Take a light dumbbell in both hands in front of your body, (you can also use household items like a two liter bottle), begin by squatting and dropping the weight to the outside of your left knee while keeping your upper body facing forward. As you return to the starting position, raise the weight at an angle above your head to the opposite shoulder. Repeat to the other side.

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For more information on training contact the DMC Fitness Center at 313-745-9748 or contact Craig DeLeon at cdeleon2@dmc.org

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