



MEDICAL AND TRAINING ADVICE

FOR A SAFE PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION AT THE ONE OF THE ROAD RACES OF QUANTUM NICOSIA MARATHON



TAKING CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

If you are participating in one of the Road Races of the Nicosia Marathon, please read the information below.

As you know, taking part in running events is beneficial to your health but participants need to take responsibility for their own health by equipping themselves with the right information for their participation.

The following simple tips on how to take care of your body in the final weeks leading up to event day will help you to have a safe and healthy participation.

To enjoy the unique experience of participating in the Marathon, the half-marathon or one of the road races of the Nicosia Marathon, and at the same time not to endanger yourself to possible risks, you should be in a good physical condition and in good health on the day of the race.



MEDICAL PROBLEMS

The Organising Committee is pleased when the participation at the Marathon, the half-marathon and the other race events is numerous. Everyone can participate, irrespective of fitness levels, provided they have the approval of their physician. This is why it is necessary during the period prior to the race to visit their doctor to discuss any possible medical issues. **All participants, particularly people over 35 years old, should go through a diagnostic cardiac physical examination.**

In any case, the responsibility of participating in the Marathon events or not rests exclusively with the athlete.



LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

If a participant has some serious medical problem, which could lead you into unconsciousness, such as diabetes, please inform the Organising Committee, and note all details of your medical history and medication you follow, on the back side of the participation (bib) number.



HEALTHY TO PARTICIPATE

Jogging is good for the heart. However in some cases serious health problems emerged, which even lead to death, where athletes suffered from heart diseases without knowing. The problem could have been detected earlier if they did the necessary examinations. A simple fitness test is not enough.

If you have in your family a history of heart disease, a sudden death, high cholesterol or high pressure, but most importantly, if you personally have symptoms like chest pains, distress which lasts for a long time, or high pulse rates, then we must advise you to visit your doctor.



TRAINING

You should increase training gradually, to avoid muscle aches and exhaustion. Select the days where your training will be heavy or light, as well as the time to rest, so that your body strengthens effectively. To reduce the risk of injuries, try to have a variety in your training, for example change the surface you run on and the speed you run. You could also change the shoes you use for training. Always take care of cars, and wear clothes which make you visible at night.



TRAINING WHILE FEELING UNWELL

If you have the flu or a cold, please do not train until you have recovered fully. Start your exercise program by increasing the frequency and intensity gradually and progressively. Do not attempt immediately to make up for the lost training because it could lead to injuries or get you sick again. If you had recently the flu which lasted for a month or more, please re-think about participating in these races.

Note: If one month before the marathon you cannot easily run 20 kilometres, then most probably you will not be safe during the Marathon or Halfmarathon nor will you enjoy the experience. In such case please do not run in the Marathon or Halfmarathon. You could participate in the 10km or 5km Road Race.



DRINKS

Body fluids lost when sweating must be replenished, otherwise the body dehydrates and the efficiency of the organism is reduced. Alcoholic drinks, tea and coffee dehydrate our body. The adequate intake of non alcoholic drinks is recommended, especially if the weather is warm. Drink plenty of fluids, so that your urine has a pale yellow colour. Drink plenty of fluids after each workout and practice in such a way, so that you are able to drink during training as well.

In the last two days before the race consume plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol. Do not drink too much right before the race, and avoid drinking water too fast immediately after the race, because it can lead to **hyponatremia**.



CONSUMPTION OF FLUIDS ON THE DAY OF THE RACE

Start your race well hydrated. Up to half an hour before the race you can drink 250ml of water or an isotonic solution (for example Powerade). Please avoid using bottled water for uses other than the usual (thirst), for example pour water on your head or body, because you might delay the consumption of water of athletes near you, who might have a real need of water to hydrate.



SAFE FLUID CONSUMPTION

Drinking too little can lead to problems, since it is essential to replenish the fluids we lose while sweating. Drinking too much can be dangerous and lead to hyponatremia and in some cases can even cause serious health problems. Drink liquids whenever you feel you need, but not in large quantities or in one go, before, during and after the race.

The needs of each athlete for liquids vary depending on his/her sweat rate, the constitution of his body, his/her speed during the race and especially the climate conditions during the race day. Faster runners (under 3+30) might need during a hot day one (1) litre of water every one hour. Slower runners might need less, and in particular on a cooler day they should not need over 500ml of water per hour.

There will be enough support stations providing water. **THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT IT IS NECESSARY** to drink water at each station just swallows big gulps of water regularly. Additionally, if you need isotonic drinks instead of water, these will be provided at predetermined support stations.

After finishing the race avoid drinking large quantities of water. You can hydrate gradually over the next 24-48 hours. Eat some salty food and make sure to drink fluids at regular intervals. This way you will avoid hyponatremia, and will substitute the water, salts and glycogen you lost during the Marathon.



FOOD

Eat whatever food suits you! Large doses of supplementary vitamins and minerals, for example iron, are not necessary, and provide no advantage. If you follow a good and varied diet, extra vitamin C in small quantities is very important, particularly when derived from fresh fruits and vegetables.

Training helps you keep at high levels the glycogen in your muscles, if you consume enough hydrocarbons. If you have the chance, consume some hydrocarbons, two hours before running in the Marathon or any other long distance run. Avoid changing your normal diet too fast, for example within the last week before the marathon, but make sure you eat more proteins, for example meat, as well as hydrocarbons such as pasta, rice, bread, cereal and sweet food in general. Especially during the last 3 days before the race, it would be preferable you decrease your training. This helps increase muscle glycogen.



DO NOT RUN IF YOU FEEL UNWELL

Do not run if you feel unwell, even if it is for charity reasons. Most medical incidents occur to athletes who participate, even if they do not feel all right, because they do not want to miss the specific sporting event. If you feel that you have a fever, if you are vomiting, diarrhoea or if you have chest pains, please do not race, particularly in the Marathon and Half-Marathon. It will be unfair for yourself and the event, if you cause an emergency. More such events will be organised in the future, do not take the risk.



ON THE DAY OF THE RACE

Please wear the appropriate clothes, depending on weather conditions. On a colder day, you might feel cold, if you run slowly, or walk. A hat and gloves will prevent heat loss and you can hold them easily. If the weather is warm, wear light clothing, start your run slowly and try to run under shade where possible. Wear running shoes that you have used already, and know they will not cause blisters.



AT THE FINISH LINE

As soon as you cross the finish line do not stand still. Keep walking, especially if you feel dizzy, and drink enough liquids to replenish the ones your body lost during the race.

Go as soon as possible to the area that you will collect your clothes, take your bag with your personal belongings and wear dry warm clothes. The use of a blanket is not sufficient to avoid cold or hypothermia. After that, make sure you drink something but slowly, and eat as well, always at the same pace.

Some runners might feel they will faint even after one and a half hours after they finish the race because they do not drink enough fluids or do not eat well. But again, do not drink excessively.

Run lightly. Follow this advice and most likely you will not need any medical assistance. Doctors will be present on the course at support stations.

If you quit the race, don't worry! Ask assistance from the organization staff and go head for the nearest support station where a doctor is present, to receive the necessary care.

Pay attention to the above advice, and keep them as a guide before and during the Marathon event.

We wish you good luck!
Organising Committee Quantum Nicosia Marathon

*The present text is edited and approved by **the Health Services of the Quantum Nicosia Marathon**, and has been based on instructions given by Organisers of Major International long distance events and Marathon races.*