

# WASHINGTON COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS CLUB

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## NEWS AND NOTES

Everyone here at the WCRRC news desk hopes that this shortened edition of the newsletter finds you well. There has been so much going on in the world and within our little corner of the world that we wanted to share as many notes that we can. There have been quite a few questions circulating around, so here's hoping that some of them may be answered here. If you do have any questions, feel free to email any of us at the bottom of this page and we will try to get them answered soon as we can.

First off, as all of you can probably tell, there have been a lot of races that have either postponed or completely cancelled. As you all have heard by now the Pittsburgh Marathon has been cancelled. If you have signed up to run the race you can either run a virtual race or receive a refund. Check out their website for more information. Also, the Boston Marathon has been slated to be run in September. There are a lot of spring and early summer marathons and half-marathons that are probably going to either be cancelled or moved. If you have any of them selected to run in, make sure to check their website to keep up to date on any changes. The Barnesville Park race has been tentatively moved to August 29<sup>th</sup>. The Dock to Lock race is looking to move their race to October. The Yough River Trail 5K/10K/10M/Half Marathon has been moved to May 30<sup>th</sup> as of right now. The Pittsburgh Pirates 5K/10K has also been cancelled for this year. Also, it has been reported that the Race for the Cure will be postponed until September. We are sure that there will be other races either moving or cancelled. As soon as we have any information on them, we will send out a mass

email out to everyone we have addresses for to keep you informed.

There also is the question about our Grand Prix events. As of today, things are going to stay the same as they are. But since all these races are either being cancelled or moved that will mean that everything will be in a state of flux. Any race directors that have races scheduled on the Grand Prix, please get back to either Tom or Bob to let us know if there is any date changes or cancellations to your races. As of now it looks like the last half of the year is going to be very top-heavy with races going on every weekend. So, keep tuned to the website and the newsletter to see what changes will need to be made.

Another race that was just found to be cancelled was the Canonsburg Chamber/Sarris Candy Bunny hop, scheduled for April 18.

We would also like to welcome Deb and Pat Calmbacher to the WCRRC. Deb and Pat live in Triadelphia, WV. Thanks for becoming members and we hope that as soon as the racing season opens again that we will see you at some of the events.

Once again, thanks to everyone who attended the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual WCRRC banquet. Comments sounded like everyone had a great time. Special thanks to our guest speaker, Mike Radley. Congratulations to everyone who won an award that evening and a special congratulations to the winners of the Scott Garet Most Improved Runners Award, Ricky Andrews and Grace Goffi. Bob still has the awards to those who could not attend and hopefully will be able to get them to you soon.

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To report Grand Prix times, call Tom Trettel (724) 229-0201 or e-mail [trettelt@comcast.net](mailto:trettelt@comcast.net). Or Grace Goffi at [gracegoffi@verizon.net](mailto:gracegoffi@verizon.net). For newsletter information or to submit an article contact Bob Pikelis e-mail [r.pikelis@comcast.net](mailto:r.pikelis@comcast.net).



# How to Make Healthy Food Choices When You're Home All Day

## NUTRITION, PRO TIPS

March 24, 2020

As COVID-19 disrupts life as we know it, you may be adapting to a new lifestyle for an undetermined length of time. All of this change can feel unsettling and remove the anchors that make you feel grounded.

If you're overindulging in food or alcohol in an effort to self-soothe, you're not alone. We spoke with pro ultrarunner Magda Boulet, and Registered Dietician Susan Kitchen, about healthy choices and self-care during this time of stress and uncertainty.

### **Manage your stress**

Stress is often a culprit when we're tempted to overindulge. According to Boulet, stress increases levels of the hormone cortisol, which can increase cravings for foods that are high in sugar, fat and salt.

Boulet says the best way to tackle stress is to acknowledge the trigger behind it. "If you're stressed because you need to process information, getting some exercise and talking to someone can help," she says.

She also finds that mindful breathing is a good way to calm down. Taking a few quiet moments could be exactly what you need.

"And, if you're truly hungry, making good choices with food is the right way to go," says Boulet. No need to skip meals or avoid food, just keep healthy options on hand to make it easier.

### **Good nutrition is crucial for immune health**

Runners already stress their bodies enough through training. If you're emotionally stressed as well, nutrition becomes even more important as a recovery tool.

Boulet says she always considers immune-boosting food important when she puts together a meal.

"The body doesn't recognize whether stress is emotional or physical," she says. "To help it recover you need food that is nutrient-dense." She recommends plant-heavy meals that are rich in vitamins, minerals and fiber.

### **Pre-plan your meals**

Planning is always important, but with the uncertainty of COVID-19, it becomes even more necessary.

Registered dietician Susan Kitchen says, "Make a list of foods you'd like to eat to follow a healthy regiment."

Many communities are finding that longer-lasting foods have disappeared from shelves but fresh ones are still available. So, Kitchen recommends getting as much of the fresh stuff as you can.

Trying to avoid the store? "You can potentially have them delivered," she says.

### **Handling trigger foods**

If you stocked up on tempting treats, Kitchen has some ideas.

"I don't advocate throwing anything away," she says. But you can make it less available. If a trigger food is calling your name when you're stressed, she says, "Freeze some of it. Package it in portions and use that after a meal."

Generally, don't put yourself in a position to constantly grapple with self-control. "Keep healthy options you do want to snack on, whether that's celery, peanut butter, bananas, apples, hummus or Greek yogurt, for example."

In short, there are plenty of delicious foods that are nutritious and still satisfying.

### **Don't let yourself get too hungry**

"Carve time out for yourself," says Kitchen. "Don't let yourself get too hungry, as it can make it harder to make good decisions."

If you're working from home, plan a balanced lunch at a reasonable time, along with scheduled breaks to move, and get some sun.

### **Make meals colorful**

To keep things interesting (and nutritious), Boulet focuses on colorful foods. "This week my theme is anything orange. Like carrots, ginger, and turmeric. I have fun with it and it's immune-boosting."

When all else fails, she says, if you're not sure how to get more veggies into your diet, an easy way to work them in is with a morning smoothie. You don't need to bake or have a lot of skill in the kitchen.

If you want to eat more veggies and don't know where to start, Boulet suggests making a soup.

"Soups are a great way to sneak in fruits, vegetables and spices that you may not be used to. You can throw in the dark, leafy vegetables," she says. "Cruciferous vegetables go really well in soup, like cabbage. Variety is key to getting those minerals and vitamins."

### **Eat fermented foods for gut health and a better mood**

Boulet is a fan of fermented foods, which are rich in probiotic bacteria that benefit the gut and the mind, as well.

Boulet says, "There's a high correlation between gut health, mood and the brain. Serotonin is found in your gut, and in order to increase it, you've got to feed your gut."

Fermented foods like kimchi, yogurt, miso and sauerkraut are excellent choices.

"I'm picky with the quality of fermented foods," says Boulet, adding that if you have a choice between shelf-stable varieties vs. refrigerated, go for the refrigerated options with live cultures.



# 7 Tips for Keeping Your Spirits High

[CULTURE. PRO TIPS](#)

March 25, 2020

As COVID-19 changes the world each day, it's easy to feel a sense of helplessness. Now as much as ever, it's crucial to prioritize your physical and mental health. Here are seven practical tips from running to cooking, for bettering your physical and mental health during these unprecedented times.

## Go for a run (as long as you are healthy)

If you feel well enough, keep running. Or start running. According to a phone interview with [Dr. David C. Nieman](#), Professor and Director of the Human Performance Laboratory at Appalachian State University, regular exercise, like running, is excellent for preventing the common cold.

A [2011 study](#) from Dr. Neiman's lab shows that sick days for the common cold during a 12-week period in the winter or fall is reduced by 25 to 50 percent for people who exercise most days of the week.

Running is also an excellent way to handle stress. [Trail running](#), in particular, is therapeutic in times of stress and anxiety. A [2015 study](#) conducted by Stanford University shows that exercise in a natural environment (as opposed to an urban one), can reduce neural activity in the part of the brain at risk for mental illness.

However, if you can't get into the woods, simply spending some time outdoors moving is a solid choice.

## Rest if you need to rest

If you don't feel well, take this time to rest and heal, away from everyone else. If you're sick, don't run.

Dr. Nieman says that exercise is excellent for prevention of illness when part of a healthy lifestyle, but it is not a therapy to use once you're sick.

Vigorous exercise, like a speed workout, "doesn't take away illness or hasten its decline. It can do the opposite and make everything worse."

If you're sick, stay home, rest and keep the germs to yourself.

## Supplement your running with at-home strength and mobility training

If you're stuck at home, it's easy to spend too much time in front of screens. Running aside, try to [move more](#) in general.

If you don't make time for [strength](#) and mobility exercises due to busy schedules. Now is the time to get back to those things that make your body feel healthy and strong.

Do [yoga](#). Add in more [dynamic movement](#) that you can do anywhere, whether you're warming up before a run or just trying to loosen up after hours in front of the computer.

## Find goals that you can still pursue

Your race may have been canceled, but that doesn't mean you have to stop training completely. If you were ready to earn a new PR, take that fitness and put it into a time trial or a virtual race.

You can still get competitive (if that's your thing) on [Strava](#) and other platforms. Pick a



course, and grind it out. If you struggle to stay motivated without a race, check in with your local store and [join our online community for encouragement](#).

For many people, running isn't about competition. Perhaps you enjoy the solitude of running solo, the joy of gaining fitness, or running farther than you have before. Whatever makes you happy, keep yourself healthy and fit. Take a break from speed workouts if you want to just run easy. Take care of yourself in the way that feels best to you.

## Read

Perhaps it's cliché, but reading is one of the healthiest ways to escape and put your mind in a different space. Gain inspiration from someone who has overcome obstacles. [Go for some of our favorite running books to get advice and inspiration from pro runners](#), or take a break from the running world and read about something else entirely. Dive into the genre keeps you interested.

## Try something new in the kitchen. And eat your fruit

[According to Elyse Kopecky](#), co-author of *Run Fast. Cook Fast. Eat Slow.*, the most important thing an athlete can do, besides training, is learn to cook healthy food. Try out a new recipe. Experiment with combinations based on what's in your pantry. You may discover a new favorite. What's more, adequate caloric intake is crucial for runners' recovery and immune health. Over the phone, Dr. Nieman described a 2017 [study](#) in which they found that carbohydrate and polyphenol supplementation reduces post-exercise stress to the immune system, decreases inflammation and improves metabolic function.

Foods such as bananas and berries are rich in carbohydrate and polyphenols and act as

a countermeasure to physiological stress when taken before, during and after strenuous exercise.

One of the most taxing things you can do to your immune system, according to Dr. Nieman, is to engage in intense exercise (like a half marathon effort or longer) without any carbohydrate in your system. Add mental stress, and lack of sleep, and it's practically a recipe for illness. In other words, running hard is good for you, but you must fuel properly and give yourself adequate rest and nutrition throughout your training.

## Support your community

If you're cooped up, use the time to connect with others over the phone or online. How many of us have lost touch with someone we love because we're too busy? Social distancing is crucial right now. But we also live in a time where that doesn't have to mean total isolation. Call your loved ones and use the time to stay connected. Encourage self care and healthy habits with friends.

In times of uncertainty it's a common instinct to hoard resources and adopt an "everyone for themselves" attitude. But communities will thrive (and you'll feel better about yourself) when we help each other. Buy gift cards to support local businesses. Get groceries for your elderly neighbor. Check on your friends and make sure others are doing okay. Talk to people on the phone. Stay connected even if it's not in person.

*By [Kate Schwartz](#). Schwartz has been running competitively for 20 years, and she currently runs with the [Asheville Running Collective](#). She lives in Asheville, NC, with her husband, Alex, and their cat, Clementine.*



# How Stress Affects Athletic Performance

Unless you are a professional athlete whose daily schedule is simplified around a train, sleep, eat, and repeat cycle, then you walk a fine line between balancing life stress with training stress. Amateur athletes should view their training loads as one part of a healthy, productive and engaged life. It's critical to take inventory of your life both in and outside sports to recognize your overall stress environment as it relates to fitness and performance.

The word stress carries a negative connotation, but it's not always a bad thing. Athletes incur two types of stress: non-training and training stress. Both affect our bodies, energy, hormones, performance and mood.

Let's break down the origin of our stress and learn how to mitigate its negative effect on our lives.

## Non-Training Stress

Non-training stress arises from unpredictable, uncontrolled daily stress that is not specific to improving your performance. Daily life stressors include work, family, finances, travel, personal expectations, time-management, and environmental stress.

Life stress that goes unmanaged inflicts a significant blow to the [endocrine system](#), which influences growth, development and metabolic activities. The two main hormones involved in stress are testosterone and cortisol, which work in tandem to create the fight-or-flight response.

When your body goes into fight mode, [testosterone is elevated](#); in a state of flight, [cortisol is elevated](#). When these hormones are out of balance due to the body's response to stress, the ability to recover and yield fitness gains becomes a pipe dream. In this scenario, your body is in an over-reached, over-trained, or under-recovered state despite the best-laid training plan.

## Training Stress

On the other hand, training stress is triggered by physical activity that causes hormonal, cardiovascular and musculoskeletal stress. Training stress is strategically applied, specific,

intentional and critical to facilitate improved performance. The trick is to apply the appropriate amount of training stress to create positive adaptation but not so much that you become over-trained, sick, or injured.

This is coined "greedy" in the performance world.

We over-train with the mindset that doing more equals a faster approach in hopes of banking fitness, when, in reality, we dig a hole of fatigue that is too deep to climb out of.

When planning your training load and approach, it's essential to quantify training stress with the non-training stress in your life to strike a balance that is manageable for you.

For example, if you are in the process of a move, deadline at work, or personal relationship or family crisis, realize the effect this situation has on your overall body stress and ease up the training load.

Avoid being so pragmatic that you overreach in an attempt to stick to your training schedule as if it were the holy grail. This situation results in lose/lose.

## Training Quantity vs. Training Quality

I rarely encounter athletes who do not judge their training plan by volume. In our world of "more is better," athletes are eager for a consistent increase in weekly mileage. Not because they just love to run, all day, every day (well, maybe a few), but because they believe intense training will transform them into a stronger, faster, better runner.

Ultimately, this reasoning is fueled by the emotional and physical drive to self-validate and give a stamp of approval to your training plan. It's more important to consider if you can recover from your training load. If not, pushing past your ability to recover is an unwise use of your physical and emotional resources.



## Identifying Accumulated Fatigue

Cultivating self-awareness of your recovery state and level of fatigue is absolutely critical to your success. A smart athlete can train right up to the red line, then intuitively know when to pull back, rest and recuperate before pushing onward.

Let's unpack the signs and symptoms of excessive fatigue to identify the kinks in your training approach. Our goal is to maximize the quality of your training load to create positive physical adaptation and fitness.

The following are [signs of being over-trained](#) or under-recovered, which are synonymous.

### Sleep

- Waking up in the middle of the night with night sweats, suggesting cortisol levels are too high
- Broken sleep patterns
- Experiencing extreme daytime fatigue but trouble falling and staying asleep at night
- Waking up feeling tired despite what felt like a full night's sleep

### Training and Performance

- A workout feels harder than it should based on previous training
- Inconsistency in training sessions from day to day. One day feels good, and the next day feels terrible
- Unable to reach or hold your top-end effort (high intensity, short bursts of high speed) in a training session
- Inability to recover from a single workout
- Poor race performance time despite good fitness

### Body and Appetite

- Unusually sore muscles related to recent training stress
- Taking longer to recover from a balanced training load
- Frequent sickness and injury
- Drastic changes in body composition, like a sudden drop in weight or sudden weight gain, or noticeably increased fat accumulation, especially in the abdomen.
- Drastic changes in appetite and cravings
- Changes in food choices
- Blood-value red flags: decreased Vit. D, serum ferritin levels, elevated morning cortisol

### Mindset and Emotional Health

- Decrease in ambition or motivation to train
- Feeling down or drab
- Lack of joy in the journey
- Apathetic toward the sport and personal goals

## How to Monitor and Track Recovery

Now that we have outlined the signs and symptoms of excessive fatigue and negative stress, it's vital to have applicable methods to track stress and recovery.

### Objective Feedback

It's wise to keep a training log or journal that tracks training volume, intensity and post-workout commentary on how the session felt. As you monitor your training sessions over time, you'll easily be able to determine if you ramped up the volume or intensity too quickly with inadequate recovery.

Tracking daily body weight and resting heart rate (morning) are effective and objective methods of monitoring recovery. If your heart rate is consistently higher for three or more days in a row, that is a sign you are experiencing fatigue. If your body weight suddenly decreases or increases along with appetite changes, that is another red flag.

### Subjective Feedback

Dialing in how you feel and listening to your inner voice is the key to your training compass. First thing in the morning when you wake up, ask yourself: how you feel, what's your mood, and are you excited to train today? Listen to that voice, and if it's saying, "I am feeling tired, unmotivated, and emotionally down," take the day off from training—guilt-free!

You will gain fitness by allowing the body to recover and taking the smart approach, not an emotional one.

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Tom Carter has asked us to see if there would be any interest this summer to run the old Waynesburg to Washington Marathon course. It wouldn't be a timed run but might be fun to see what a local marathon was like in the mid-80's. Anyone interested in any information, contact Tom at [tmc\\_15301@yahoo.com](mailto:tmc_15301@yahoo.com).

## WCRRC AT THE RACES

### SPRING THAW 10M

Rich Sandala	1:17:57
Bob Pikelis	1:18:16(A-1)
Mark Hospodar	1:53:22

### ARIZONA 13.1M

Jen Foster	1:40:30(A-1)
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### MIAMI BEACH 13.1M

Gary Lorenzi	213:56
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### FAYETTE CHILI 5K

Rich Sandala	22:28(A-2)
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### FAYETTE CHILI 5K WALK

Carl Kondrach	29:06(OA-2)
Syndi Kondrach	48:37

### MARCH MAD DASH 5M

Greg Mussitsch	31:47(OA-2)
Shane Brunazzi	45:36
Joe Lebert	59:11

### MARCH MAD DASH 10M

Rich Sandala	1:16:44
Alexandra Brooks	2:21:40

### KISS ME 5K

Rich Sandala	22:09
LuAnne McCullough	29:05
Joe Lebert	35:23
Alexandra Brooks	37:51

### KISS ME 5K WALK

Blake Headen	42:40
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## CUPIDS CHASE 5K

Doug Midcap	26:15(A-2)
Kris Midcap	32:05(A-2)
Blake Headen	53:46(WA-3)

-- We still have a run group meeting each Saturday morning early in Washington. Distance from 4-10 with the slowest runner controlling the pace. **NO ONE LEFT BEHIND.** We have had as many as 8-10. Details? Call/text Tom Carter at 724-554-2393 or Tom Trettel at 724-884-3255.

-- Great idea for Pittsburgh to provide the virtual option for their races. Many in our Saturday group are going to take advantage of it. Those virtual times will be accepted for the Grand Prix.

-- We've also decided to include a "virtual banquet" for Blake next year. We can imagine he's there. We think it's a win-win for everyone.

-- Dogs all over America will be treating tendonitis after this Pandemic. Never seen so many people walking their dogs so many times a day.

-- For the first time ever, the Boston Marathon is offering refunds because of the rescheduling. No word if they will take additional runners from the waiting list.

-- One bright side of the pandemic: Never seen trails so jammed with people exercising. Probably not good in this day of social distancing, but hopefully an act that will continue when things get back to normal.

-- With all the race cancellations, probably going to be a bunch of small races that will not be able to recover financially, especially the ones that already bought shirts, awards, supplies and then had to cancel.

-- With all this shelter time, pretty hard not to end up running too much. Nothing to do...let's hit the road.



WCRRC "One of the areas oldest and largest running clubs"  
Established 1974

(Please check one)

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Additional family members \_\_\_\_\_

Years Running or Walking? \_\_\_\_\_ Willing to help at club events? \_\_\_\_\_

Yearly Dues: \$15.00

Mail application and payment to: WCRRC  
1427 Willowbrook Drive  
Washington, PA 15301

All information given is for the club's records and will be kept confidential.

