RACE PREPARATION

MONTHS BEFORE: Train appropriately and safely for your event distance and terrain. Running or walking a race untrained is inviting a less-than-fun experience and possible injury.

WEEK BEFORE:
- Cut back on your training a little towards the end of the week (it's called "tapering").
- Take the day before the race off or take an *easy* walk, swim or bike ride.
- Get some good sleep for 2-3 nights before. Don't panic if you have one bad night.
- Hydrate well for the days leading up to and the day of the event.
- Invite your family to come. If you leave very early, maybe they could plan to arrive later.

DAY BEFORE:
- Take it easy ... no new sports or strenuous gardening or unusual activity.
- For dinner - eat something easily digestible … pasta, soup, chicken, etc.
- Check the weather and plan your outfit for race day. (Remember to plan on 20 degrees warmer) If the weather is "iffy," plan to layer. Bring warm clothes for before and after. Sometimes there is baggage storage.

DAY OF EVENT:
- Wake up early enough to feel loose and awake.
- Hydrate
- Optional – light breakfast (examples - coffee, juice, banana, toast, power bar etc). Make it easily digestible.
- Do not change your eating habits the day of the race
- Arrive at the race site at least 30-60 minutes before the race. This depends on the size of the field, parking congestion, registration procedures and porta john availability!
- Check in at registration to get your bib number or transponder chip and any race goodies.
- Pin bib number on front of shirt or shorts (not on your back).
- If the race uses a timing chip- attach it according to directions in your race packet. The chip will be collected at the finish. You **must** return it … or you will be charged!
- Porta-potty toilet lines are notoriously long (especially at an all-women's event). Plan ahead!
- Listen to announcements.
- Warm up a little. It's a good idea to walk or jog easy about 10 minutes before your event, so plan ahead. Then stretch.
- Line up according to your expected pace (minutes per mile signs are sometimes used) or a bit faster.
- When the race starts, stay relaxed, loose … hold back your pace a little. There is a tendency to get caught up in the excitement and go out at too fast a pace. DON'T DO IT!!! There will be people calling out your time at the mile markers – these times are called *splits*. Gage your pace based on your 1 mile time. Your goal is to get there at a very reasonable, comfortable pace and then maybe get a little faster with each mile.
- At the end of the race- look for the race clock for your total time or click off your watch. Finisher information is often posted on site or online later so find out where. Check it out!
- There are usually refreshments … but be considerate of other participants behind you.
- Then GLOAT!!!
- Hang out. Be proud. Stay for the awards ceremony (you may have won something).

AFTER THE RACE:
- Relax. Take a nap. Call your friends and brag. Check the website.
- You may be a little sore. Anti-inflammatory over-the-counter drugs are good to help with this.
- Take the next few days easy. If you're sore, don't run or walk for a few days. When you start back, start easy. They say you should not race or do speed work for one day for each mile of your event.
- Record your event time, distance, pace per mile, place overall and in your age group. Good benchmarks for future improvement!   (Many people keep their bib numbers and record their results on the back of the bib.)