6 Solutions to Midrun Mishaps

You're in the middle of an important training run or race when a cramp, blister, or slippery banana peel strikes. Here's how to run around these setbacks.

We're all prone to injuries, but which ones? Here's how to sidestep your aches and pains.

Oh No! Muscle Cramp
Recovery Plan: Stop running and apply pressure to the muscle. Press firmly for 15 seconds — don't massage. Then gently stretch the muscle. Repeat the pressure/stretch cycle until the cramp subsides. Walk at first, then slowly increase your pace.

Oh No! Blister
Recovery Plan: In a short run or race, keep going. Otherwise, it's best to deal with a blister before it becomes painful enough to throw oft your gait. Covering it with a Band-Aid or moleskin is ideal. But if an aid station or home is miles away, adjust your laces. Tightening them could stop heel slippage (a common cause of blisters); loosening them could take pressure off a hot spot.

Oh No! Side Stitch
Recovery Plan: Notice which foot is striking the ground when you inhale and exhale. Then switch the pattern. So if you were leading with your right foot, inhale when the left foot steps. If that doesn't help, stop running and reach both arms above your head. Bend at the waist, leaning to the side opposite the stitch.

Oh No! Ankle Turn
Recovery Plan: If you suffered a minor sprain, your first few steps will be painful. But once the ankle loosens up, you'll be able to run on it and get back in the race with ease. Stop if your pain is more severe with each step — that's a sign of a fracture.

Oh No! Stumble and Fall
Recovery Plan: Get up and assess yourself. Road rash or minor scrapes can be patched up later. (Heavy bleeding needs immediate treatment.) Running might feel difficult at first because your heart rate will be elevated and you'll be shaken up.

Oh No! Stiffness After a Pit Stop
Recovery Plan: Keep your breaks brief — two minutes at most. Walk while taking water rather than coming to a complete stop. Start back up slowly; don't resume your prior pace right away.