

Race Day Tips

The big day is almost here! After eight weeks of training, make sure you've done everything you can to increase your chances of successfully completing a 5K walk or run. Here are some tips to use for Saturday, December 5—your race day! To complete your 5K, you can also use Lexington Medical Center Health Directions West Columbia **free** on race day. For more information, e-mail tlwerts@lexhealth.org. Be sure to watch WACH FOX Good Day on Wednesday, December 2 at 7:50 a.m. for more information from Lexington Medical Center and Strictly Running. If you miss the segment, watch the video at www.midlandsconnect.com/virtual5K.

[Click HERE if you are completing the 5K at home or on a treadmill.](#)

[Click HERE if you are participating in a live race.](#)

If you are completing the 5K at home or on a treadmill

1. Plan your race by reviewing your walking or running log the day before your 5K. Do you typically have the best exercise session in the morning or evening? If you're walking or running outside, what will your route be? Have you measured the distance?
2. Set out your clothes the night before, so you are ready to go on the day of the race. You'll have one less thing to think about that day!
3. Make sure you hydrate appropriately. Start drinking more water a day or two before the race. This will ensure that you have enough water/fluids to start the race. Because your body will lose fluids, you will want to drink water during and after the race.
4. Eat a light, low-fiber, low-fat, high carbohydrate meal about two hours before the race such as a bagel with jelly, oatmeal with raisins or cereal with a banana. Stay away from rich fatty foods as they may cause GI distress during your run. You may need to avoid coffee and other caffeinated beverages since those beverages can cause GI distress for some people. Race day is not the time to try something new—eat what you've been eating all along.
5. Don't make any drastic changes on race day. Keep it simple – no new shoes, running shorts or shirts, food and drinks.
6. Within 30-minutes of the time you choose to start your race, you may want to lightly jog to warm your muscles up. Passive stretching might also be helpful. By warming up and stretching, your brain prepares for the upcoming exercise/race.
7. Once you start your race, find your comfort zone pace. It is very easy to start too fast and pay the price later. Find a comfortable pace and stick to it. After the first mile, if you feel like speeding up, go ahead and slightly increase your pace.
8. As you come to the last few meters, make sure you run through the final distance. Continue to walk forward until you catch your breath and make sure to pat yourself on the back!

If you are participating in a live race, such as The Carolina Carillon “Jingle All the Way Run” (click [here](#) for more information about this race)

1. Pick up your race packet, if possible, the day before the race. This will give you time to check out all of the information about the race and help curb your nerves.
2. Set out your clothes the night before, so you are ready to go on the day of the race. If you pick up your race packet the day before the race, you can place the race number on your shirt. Because four safety pins attach most race numbers to clothing, you also reduce the risk of poking pins into your skin vs. your shirt.
3. Make sure you hydrate appropriately. Start drinking more water a day or two before the race. This will ensure that you have enough water/fluids to start the race. Because your body will lose fluids, you will want to drink water during and after the race.
4. Eat a light, low-fiber, low-fat, high carbohydrate meal about two hours before the race such as a bagel with jelly, oatmeal with raisins or cereal with a banana. Stay away from rich fatty foods as they may cause GI distress during your run. You may need to avoid coffee and other caffeinated beverages since those beverages can cause GI distress for some people. Race day is not the time to try something new—eat what you’ve been eating all along.
5. Don't make any drastic changes on race day. Keep it simple – no new shoes, running shorts or shirts, food and drinks.
6. Drive the course before race day. This makes it a little easier on race day to know where you are running and helps you plan the race in your head. Even better, running the course during your training gives you a huge advantage.
7. Within 30-minutes of the time you choose to start your race, you may want to lightly jog to warm your muscles up. Passive stretching might also be helpful. By warming up and stretching, your brain prepares for the upcoming exercise/race.
8. On race day, know when the race starts and move into position when you see others moving that way. Do not get in the front unless you want a speedster to run over you. Also, try to stay on the right side of the starting group, so those people can pass on the left. Talk to the people around you to get an idea of their race pace so you can adjust accordingly.
9. Once you start your race, find your comfort zone pace. It is very easy to start too fast and pay the price later. Find a comfortable pace and stick to it. After the first mile, if you feel like speeding up, go ahead and slightly increase your pace. If you need to slow down, work your way over to the right side of the course.
10. As you arrive at the finish line, make sure you run through the finish line before stopping. Continue to walk forward until you have cleared the finish line crowd. At that point, race volunteers will help you turn in your timing chip or leave the finish area.

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