

BASIC RETURN TO RUNNING REHABILITATION GUIDELINE

Disclaimer

- Progression is time and criterion-based, depending on soft tissue healing, patient demographics, and clinician evaluation.
- For questions, contact Dr. Sujan Gogu's clinic.

Running Progression Guidelines

Aspect	Details
Ideal Candidates	Athletes recovering from surgical or non-surgical injuries, and recreational runners averaging less than 20 miles per week.
Purpose	Designed for end-stage rehabilitation to return to running; clinicians should use their judgment to determine the safe return to plyometrics and running.
Supplementary Options	Use Alter G and Deep Water Running Progression for post-surgical patients.

Phase I: Walking and Plyometrics

Criteria for Phase I	Details
Ability to Walk	Walk for 30 minutes without pain.
Range of Motion	Full joint range of motion must be achieved.
Strength	At least 80% strength compared to the unaffected limb (particularly for post-surgical injuries).
Edema	Minimal to no swelling should be present.

Sample Functional Hop Progression

Double Leg	Single Leg
Hop in Place	Hop in Place
Forward Hop	Forward Hop
Backward Hop	Backward Hop
Triple Hop	Triple Hop
Side-to-Side Hop	Side-to-Side Hop
Crossover	Crossover
Scissor Hops	Dot Drills
Dot Drills	Lateral Bounds/Skaters
180 Degree Hops	90 Degree Hop

Phase II: Walk to Run Progression

Criteria for Phase II	Details
Foot Contacts	Tolerate 200-250 foot contacts during activities.
Symptom Management	No symptoms should be reported, with proper plyometric form—minimal knee valgus, toe-to-heel landing, no trunk lean, and soft landings.
Heel Taps	Ability to perform 15 heel taps with correct lower extremity mechanics.

Guidelines	Details
Warm-Up	Complete a 5-minute dynamic warm-up before starting walk-to-run progression
Rest Days	Take at least one rest day between each running workout. Non-

Guidelines	Details
	impact cross-training is allowed on off days.
Complete Rest	Ensure at least one full rest day per week.
Progression	If pain or symptoms develop, or if the phase cannot be completed, remain in that phase until symptoms are resolved.
Daily Phase Completion	Only complete one phase per day

Phase	Warm-up	Run	Repetitions	Cool Down	Total Time	Days/Week
Phase 1	5-10 minutes	4 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-10 minutes	20-30 minutes	2 days
Phase 2	5-10 minutes	6 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-10 minutes	25-35 minutes	2 days
Phase 3	5-10 minutes	8 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-10 minutes	30-40 minutes	2 days
Phase 4	5-8 minutes	10 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-8 minutes	35-45 minutes	2 days

Phase III: Running Progression

Criteria for Phase III	Details
Completion of Phase II	Must complete Phase II without experiencing pain or symptoms.
Strength and Symmetry	At least 90% strength and Limb Symmetry Index compared to the unaffected limb (particularly for post-surgical injuries).
Hop Downs	Ability to perform 12-inch hop downs from a box with proper lower extremity mechanics.

Goals	Details
Mileage Increase	Gradually increase daily and weekly running mileage.
Return to Routine	Resume normal running routine within 5 weeks.
Symptom-Free Running	No return of pain or symptoms during running.

Guidelines	Details
Rest and Cross-Training	Cross-train or rest on off days, but ensure at least one full rest day per week.
Warm-Up	Perform a 5-minute dynamic warm-up and a 5-10 minute walking warm-up before running.
Cool-Down	Complete a 5-10 minute walking cool-down and post-run stretching after running.

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Total Miles
Week 1	-	1 mile	-	2 miles	-	2 miles	-	5 miles
Week 2	-	2 miles	-	3 miles	-	4 miles	-	9 miles
Week 3	-	4 miles	-	3 miles	-	4 miles	-	11 miles
Week 4	5 miles	-	4 miles	3 miles	-	5 miles	-	17 miles
Week 5	5 miles	-	6 miles	4 miles	-	5 miles	-	20 miles

Basic Return to Running Program (For Patients)

Step	Details
Step 1: Walk to Run	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete only one phase per day and perform workouts every other day • On off days, cross-train or rest; ensure one full rest day each week. • Stop if experiencing pain, swelling, or changes in running/walking patterns • Only move to the next phase when the current phase is completed symptom-free.
Step 2: Running Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-train or rest on off days, with one full rest day per week. • Avoid running on hills until normal mileage and pace are achieved. • Stop if experiencing pain, swelling, or changes in running patterns. • Focus on increasing speed before extending distance.

Recommendations to Prevent Injuries	Details
Rest Days	Ensure at least one rest day per week.
Strengthening Exercises	Continue physical therapy exercises 2-3 times a week.
Warm-Up and Stretching	Perform a dynamic warm-up before running and static stretching afterward
Mileage Adjustment	Decrease mileage or stop running if injured, then gradually return to your normal routine.
Mileage Increase	Gradually increase mileage and intensity to minimize injury risk.

Advanced Running progression

Phase	Warm-up	Run	Repetitions	Cool Down	Total Time	Days/Week
Phase 1	5-10 minutes	4 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-10 minutes	20-30 minutes	2 days
Phase 2	5-10 minutes	6 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-10 minutes	25-35 minutes	2 days
Phase 3	5-10 minutes	8 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-10 minutes	30-40 minutes	2 days
Phase 4	5-8 minutes	10 minutes run: 1 minute walk	2-4 cycles	5-8 minutes	35-45 minutes	2 days

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Total Miles
Week 1	2 miles	-	2 miles	-	-	3 miles	3 miles	10 miles
Week 2	-	4 miles	-	4 miles	-	3 miles	3 miles	14 miles
Week 3	5 miles	-	5 miles	-	-	4 miles	2 miles	16 miles
Week 4	5 miles	-	6 miles	-	-	6 miles	5 miles	22 miles
Week 5	5 miles	6 miles	-	7 miles	-	7 miles	7 miles	32 miles
Week 6	-	7 miles	10 miles	-	-	12 miles	11 miles	40 miles