

This Mother Can Run

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2012



“I remember on my way home from that race, my hair was falling out, and I told myself that I was going to do a race every other weekend – one race for each cancer treatment.”

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Race Envy

The past year has been a whirlwind. I got engaged, married and pregnant within 7 months. My running, before I met my husband, was the love of my life. I ran 5k's, marathons, and ultras. My favorite thing to do on weekends was go for long runs with my friend, Sam. My life revolved around my running. Lucky for me, I married a runner.

Evan and I would run together before work several times a week. When I became pregnant, I continued running, until about 3 weeks ago. I decided that the pressure I was beginning to feel in my lower abdomen was my body telling me enough is enough. My doctor agreed. He is pretty progressive as far as exercise during pregnancy, especially running. He told me I would know when I needed to stop, to listen to my body, and I did. In all honesty I was hoping to be one of those moms that would be able to run until delivery and then pick right back up.

“I run because I love it, because it keeps me sane, because it's in my soul, because at the end of every run, every race I have the same feelings...pride, happiness, peace.”

I have recently come down with a case of race envy. I have had it before but now as my belly expands, I have become obsessed with what I can't do...RUN!

“My life revolved around my running.”

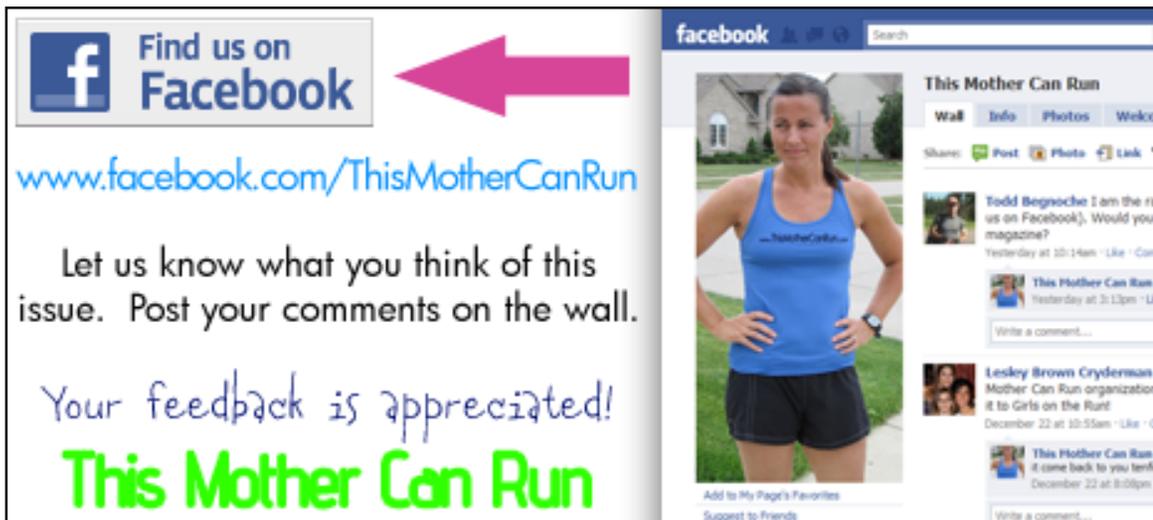


I was inspired by the women who ran the marathon in Chicago 9 months pregnant, but I am being extra cautious in lieu of the fact that this is my first pregnancy, and I am terrified that I will do something to harm my baby. With 2 months to go, I am reduced to walking, some very light weight training and yoga. I am fine with this because it is all for the most noble cause, delivering a healthy baby! However, I do have to confess that I miss running terribly. It's a part of me, and I feel incomplete without it.

On Sunday, a few of my friends ran the BPAC. This is a 6 hour race, where you run as many of the 3.5 mile loops as you can in the allotted time. I have done this race a few times, and it is one of my favorites! Race envy set in immediately. Are any of you familiar with this syndrome? It's a feeling that runner's have when they can't do what they love most. Whether you are injured, or pregnant, or volunteering at a race or pacing a friend, race envy inevitably sets in. I have crewed and

paced in several races, and it is like pure torture. Why didn't I sign up for this race? I say it to myself every time. Although I often say the opposite while running a race...Why the hell did I sign up for this? But I know why...I run because I love it, because it keeps me sane, because it's in my soul, because at the end of every run, every race I have the same feelings...pride, happiness, peace.

As I journey through these last months of pregnancy, I feel such joy because I am actually training for the most important event of my life! When baby arrives I hope to return to running as soon as the doc gives me the green light. Evan and I laugh because when most mommies ask for jewelry for their "push present", I asked for a running stroller and new sneakers! I want to pick a race to train for. I was hoping to do a marathon in the fall (baby Lucy is due July 7th), but I am going to try to be as realistic as possible. I highly doubt that I will have the time to take care of a newborn and train for a marathon. Heck, I'll be lucky if I can take a shower. Also, being a first time mother, I really don't know what my body will feel like post delivery. All I do know is that I can't wait to get back out there, whether it be the trails, the street or the treadmill! When baby Lucy arrives she is going to be mommy's little pacer.



Luciana Gaskill is a 31 year old veterinary technician from Lockport, NY. She and her husband, Evan, just recently welcomed Lucy Marie Gaskill into their family. Lucy was born on July 10th, 2012. She has completely changed their lives in the best possible way.

Luciana has been a runner since college, where she just started jogging around campus for fitness. Her passion progressed over time. She loves marathons and ultras but has a great time at 5Ks as well. In her opinion, there is nothing like a runner's high. When she became pregnant, she continued running until she was close to 8 months. She attributes running to her great pregnancy. Staying active is so crucial during those special 9 months! Now her days are filled with breastfeeding and changing diapers, and she longs for the day that the doctor says she can start running again. Her goal as a runner is to continue challenging herself, whether it be to go faster or farther. Her goal as a mother is to help her daughter find something she is as passionate about!



"Evan and I laugh because when most mommies ask for jewelry for their "push present", I asked for a running stroller and new sneakers!"

THE ONE THING I'D REALLY LIKE ALL RUNNING MOMS TO STOP SAYING

Ok, I'm finally gonna do it. I've stayed silent on the matter long enough. I'm going to make this plea and beg you all to stop saying something. I hear it far too frequently in my many, many conversations with running moms, and quite frankly, it's just not true. And I'm going to kindly ask you all to rethink this statement just a little bit. It's this one (or some variation of it): **"Running is the one thing I do just for me."**

No, it isn't. Even if you think it is, it isn't.

Now, I get the sentiment behind the statement. TRUST ME. I get it. As a mom, you pretty much spend every waking minute (and often many of those minutes which you intend to NOT be awake) in dedication to the little people in your life that you adore. You give of yourself until there's nothing left, and then you find a way to give some more. I know this.

Running seems like the one thing where you leave it all behind and just take care of you and your needs.

But here's the thing ladies, even though you might intend for your runs to be "just for you," by default they aren't. Every time you set foot out that door or onto the treadmill, you are doing something that benefits not just you, but your entire family.

For starters, your kids NEED a healthy mama not only to keep up with them on a daily basis, but so that you'll be around for a long time. I realize that tomorrow is promised to no one, but we all know that a regular exercise routine, in our case running, is good for you and can help prolong your life. Recent studies have



"Running seems like the one thing where you leave it all behind and just take care of you and your needs."



shown that runners typically live longer than non-runners. (Yay for us!)

And don't forget about the way you FEEL when you come back in from a run. Refreshed, energized, ready to tackle the world or that toilet that your 3 year clogged with three rolls of toilet paper and your entire family's toothbrushes while on your husband's watch when you were gone. For me personally, I clearly have more energy, patience and I'd even say mental





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clarity after I run. That's crucial to surviving those days when my kiddos are perhaps not at their finest and really putting my mothering skills to the test.

But hands down, in my opinion, the MOST IMPORTANT reason we all need to stop saying that running is "just for us" is this: childhood obesity is at near epidemic proportions in the U.S. and that doesn't go away by changing what the school cafeteria serves at lunch or holding classroom sessions at on nutrition. Changing that problem, starts with us moms. Period.

You and I both know that our children are watching our every move. If we are eating healthy, they are too. They don't have much choice in the matter since we put it on their plates. If we are exercising, they are too. Now, every kid's different and running may not be the exercise of choice for yours, but every time you run, you are at the very least setting an example of health and fitness for your child (and for that matter, everyone around you, including



“Now, every kid’s different and running may not be the exercise of choice for yours, but every time you run, you are at the very least setting an example of health and fitness for your child.”



that mom of three that just passed you by in her car.) You are showing them that yes, it IS important to exercise, but it is not uncommon for your little ones to want to jump on the running bandwagon too. I've seen it time and again.

Even on the days you DON'T want to go run and it's not all happy, happy joy, joy as you prepare to do so, you are STILL teaching your kids an important lesson. You're teaching

them that everything in life is not always fun. Sometimes you have to do things you don't want to do just because it's important and/or the right thing to do. And for all of us, there are days when running is one of those things.

But I'm not done. Through running you teach your kids about: goal setting, the importance of training and preparedness for meeting those goals, perseverance, determination, commitment, hard work, good sportsmanship...the list could really go on and on. Become a charity runner and a whole world of possibilities of things to teach your children opens up. Far more than just giving = good, not that that's a bad lesson for them to learn, but also learning about various issues that affect this planet and everyone on it - money management, saving, fundraising, writing, public speaking, and empathy to name just a few.

So I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news here mamas, but whether you like it or not, running is NOT the one thing you do just for yourself. Your runs are important for your entire family. (Remember THAT the next time the couch is calling or you feel like your running shoes have turned to cinder blocks on a tough run. It'll be far more difficult to succumb to the temptation at hand).

But the good news is, now you need to go pick something else to do just for you! A nap, coffee with a girlfriend, a movie with your sister, a trip to the spa for a much needed pedicure or massage, or even just a 15 minute bubble bath with a good book.

Those are things just for you. Although, now that I'm thinking about it, taking a little mental break and doing something like the above, is probably necessary for maintaining sanity while raising children. So even those too may be more for the fam than it actually is for mom. Oh man, is it even possible for a mom to do something just for herself? Hmm...

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"Running is the one thing I do just for me."
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Kelly Collins is an RRCA certified running coach, writer, blogger, wife and stay at home mamma to two beautiful and wildly entertaining little girls ages 2 and 5 with another little running princess on the way due to make her arrival this fall. Read Kelly's latest adventures of mixing pregnancy, mommyhood, and running at Secrets of A Running Mom (www.runfast-mommy.com) or visit her at her coaching website www.runningcoachformoms.com.
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RUNNING FOR LIFE



Carol Chaoui is not all that different from one of us. She is a wife and mother of four. She helps her husband with consulting, and she does volunteer work. Carol is healthy, and she loves to run. Three years ago Carol was diagnosed with breast cancer. Even the healthiest among us can get breast cancer. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Early detection is the key! I was informed and enlightened during this interview with Carol. And after reading this article, I'm sure you'll agree with me that This Mother Can Run!

Q: How old were you when you were diagnosed with breast cancer? How old were your kids? What stage was your breast cancer?

A: In July of 2009 I was diagnosed, and I was 45 years old. My kids' ages were 15, almost 13, 10 and 6. It was an invasive stage 3.

Q: Were you getting annual mammograms before being diagnosed? And how did you find out you had breast cancer?

A: Yes, I had my first mammo in 2004 just before I turned 41. Here when you go in, you have to wait in a waiting room while the radiologist checks your images. I got called back a second time, and there were four Carols in the waiting room that day so I kept thinking they got the wrong Carol. Then they called me back a third time, and you just know something isn't right. Then I was called back a fourth time, and then I started to panic. I had never been called back before, and I had an old fashioned cell phone so I couldn't text my husband. The radiologist then told me that there were some slight changes from last year. I had some calcifications in my left breast that had never been there, and they wanted to do

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"And there was another tumor the size of a golf ball, and all the breast tissue in between the two tumors was cancerous."
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a biopsy. When I was leaving with an ice pack on my breast, I remember thinking earlier in the day I thought I was going to go in for my mammogram and then get some errands done

afterward. I remember my doctor saying that it wasn't screaming cancer, but they just wanted to be sure. I didn't sleep at all that night, and the next morning I got the call that



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the results were inconclusive. Then 48 hours later I was on my way to a 5 mile road race and I got the call saying that it was definitely cancer and that I had to come in the next morning for an MRI. I thought I was going to be able to complete the race on adrenaline, but it was so tough because I was so sleep deprived. I ended up winning my age group, but my time was slow. I ran into this coach for a road group I'm in, and she asked if I was tired or hurt, and I just broke down. I told her the news that I just received. That was tough.

Then the next morning I went out for a little 3 mile de-stressing jog before the MRI, and I saw all these people all dressed in pink, and I asked what was going on and they told me it was the Komen 3 Day Walk. I told them that I was about to go in for my MRI, and these strangers were all hugging me and telling me that I'm going to make it because I'm an athlete! I was overwhelmed!

We had planned to go to Switzerland for two weeks. (I lived there for 9 years. My in-laws live there.) They told us to go and enjoy ourselves because the next year was going to be tough. We left for Geneva, where I ran every day with my husband. I really tried to enjoy myself. I was still healing from the biopsy, so I wasn't able to forget about it completely.

I would try to notice if I felt a lump, but I never did even during my monthly self breast exams. Then two days after we got back, I had my mastectomy. First, they removed the central lymph node, and it was positive which means it had spread



to the other lymph nodes. So they had to do a radical mastectomy, which means removing the breast all the way back to my chest wall because when they opened me up they found a tumor the size of a tennis ball. And there was another tumor the size of a golf ball, and all the breast tissue in between the two tumors was cancerous. So it was declared invasive stage 3 with high likely recurrence. Once the pathology report came back they determined that I had the cancer for five years, and it went undetected even with the annual mammograms. They told me I had dense breast tissue (which makes it harder to detect), but since I didn't have family history of it, they didn't think to do an MRI. So I was lucky that this radiologist noticed that there was a change.

Q: So it sounds like you did everything right, but your cancer was able to go undetected. Is that how you felt about the situation?

A: Yes, I breast fed four children, healthy diet, not overweight, never smoked, red wine in moderation, regular self breast exams, and annual mammograms. It's scary that it went undetected. What scared me is that they say that if you have a larger tumor, it's worse to have dense breast tissue.

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“Even though it went five years undetected, it was even more important that I didn't miss my annual mammograms, because without that test, I might not be here today.”

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Q: How do you know if you have dense breast tissue? Does it become more dense as you age?

A: Dense breast tissue is less fatty. So if you have a fatty breast, the images are clearer, and if you have dense breast tissue, the image comes out almost white. It's like looking for a grain of rice in a glass of milk.

Q: So it sounds like it would be harder to detect tumors in more healthy individuals. Is that true?

A: Yes, absolutely which is kind of ironic. Even though it went five years undetected, it was even more important that I didn't miss my annual mammograms, because without that test, I might not be here today.

Q: How did facing mortality at such a young age affect you and your

family?

A: You're tempted to Google your chances, but I didn't do that. I did have people tell me that I had a 50% chance of making it past five years. And I thought geez, thanks for the information! But with the kids, if I could do one thing differently, I would have involved a social worker or a therapist. They seemed okay, and they saw that I was out running and doing races after treatments. I think the younger kids took it better because they're more curious. They asked questions. My youngest son had just turned 7 that fall. He was constantly asking questions about the mastectomy and the chemo. There was a drug I had to have after chemo. My son, Darrin, watched my husband give me my first 3 shots and then he gave me my last 5. But I feel like the teenagers suffered in silence. And sometimes you don't realize it until 6 months or a year later. If I could do it over again, I think I would be more involved with them and talking with them. You know, asking them if they were afraid, what are they feeling. It's tough because it's such

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“I feel like when you're going through the treatments, you have so much support, and then when it's done, you're left dealing with the idea that your body is different, the side effects of the medication, and sometimes if you have an ache or a pain, you wonder if it's your cancer coming back.”

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a selfish age. They want to be involved in their stuff and not worry about their mom. I think it's definitely easier if you have younger kids.

Q: How has your life changed since the cancer?

A: It's been two years since my diagnosis and treatment, and now I'm on Estrogen blocking hormones for the next 10 years. I feel like you're nervous for the first couple of years, trying to adjust to this. I feel like when you're going through the treatments, you have so much support, and then when it's done, you're left dealing with the idea that your body is different, the side effects of the medication, and sometimes if you have an ache or a pain, you wonder if it's your cancer coming back. Each year gets a bit easier. I feel like I worry less now. I know the first two years I thought about it every day, not all the time, but for example, I'd be out on a run and just start thinking about whether I was going to make it to the next five years. I did have the reconstructive surgery, and then they had complications with the implants, and I had to have it redone. And I'm also dealing with neuropathy issues (tingling leg) as a side effect of the drugs. I fell coming out of my driveway and broke a rib. I ran on it for a few days not knowing it was broken. Four days later I was out on a run with my husband, and I told him I couldn't breathe. In March I had a hemorrhage as another side effect of the medication. When they were caring for that issue they found that I had an ovarian cyst. They kept an eye on it, and in a few short months, it had tripled in size. They



saw some polyps and a small tumor in the fallopian tubes. So just this past June I had both ovaries removed, along with the fallopian tubes and the polyps. For me it was peace of mind getting it all removed because once you have breast cancer, you have a better chance to get cervical cancer. This surgery is known as an oophorectomy. This was even more tough than the mastectomy because with the mastectomy I was in the hospital for three days. With the oophorectomy, they sent me home in a day. Then I wasn't allowed to run for 4 weeks. Luckily I was back out running in mid July. So I feel like I'm back to my old self.

Q: Is it more likely that you'll get other cancers once you have breast cancer?

A: They don't like to scare you, but it is more likely that if you have breast cancer that you will get ovarian, cervical or uterine cancer. There is also a link to getting those cancers due to the medication I have to take since I had breast cancer. And then they say that once you go through radiation, you can get any of the blood cancers like leukemia. The TV reporter, Robin Roberts has leukemia from the radiation since her breast cancer. However, I do think that the benefits outweigh the risks.

Q: What is the good that you're taking from this experience?

A: One of the things I'm grateful for is this sense of community. When I was diagnosed, my neighbors started the Lots of Helping Hands website for me. It's a community website to help with rides for the kids, meals, transportation to treatments, play dates, doctor's appointments... We were overwhelmed by the generosity. Within a few weeks, 130 people signed up to help out.

After seeing that, we really wanted to show our thanks and get out there and help others. I've run the Boston Marathon for the Breast Health Care Access Program, and I've become the go-to person for the newly diagnosed cancer patients. So I try to help out new patients, even if it's just going for a walk, doing a care package, or helping with treatments. So I think it helped me learn to be more generous within the community and helping others.

Q: What advice do you have for other women regarding breast cancer?

A: I used to think breast cancer is breast cancer is breast cancer, but each cancer is so different and each person responds so differently to the treatment. I think it's very important to get your screening yearly once you turn 40, do the self breast exam, be healthy, exercise, and the main thing is to

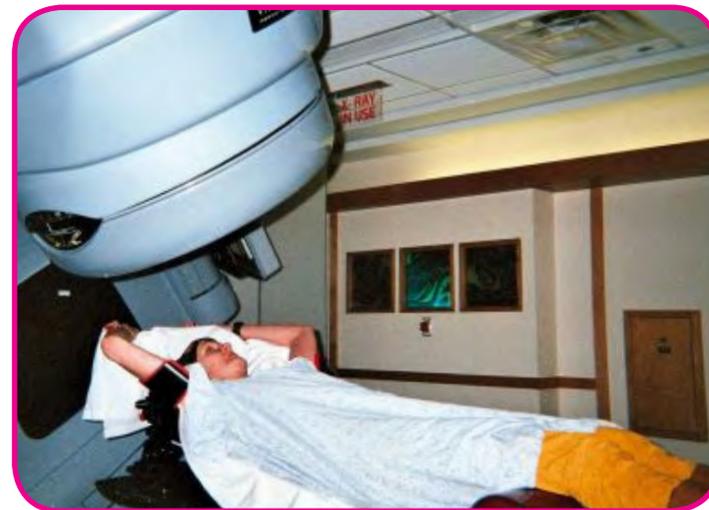


“I was really nervous, but when you have kids, you know you have to get through it for them.”

stay positive. It's important to maintain a sense of humor.

Q: How has running helped you deal with breast cancer?

A: My doctor said going into the treatments that I had a big advantage over someone who was overweight because your heart is a muscle, and I was healthy. Four weeks to the date after my mastectomy I was out running. Then I signed up for the Komen 5K Race for the Cure. Going to that race transformed me because I was able to meet all these survivors. It was very emotional and transformational for me. I remember on my way home from that race my hair was falling out, and I told myself that I was going to do a race every other weekend – one race for each cancer treatment. I would go to these races and either run bald or wear my pink bandana, and my friends were so supportive. I would get emails from people saying that they had no reason not to train if I was out there after getting treatments. It was motivational for me to be out there and to stay healthy. I think it was good for my kids to see me out there running, and I think I won my age group in almost all the races that I did. I think I got very lucky that year! But I think it was good for my kids to see that, and I think it kept them positive as well. Then when I did the marathon when I finished radiation, they were very excited to be out there on the course, watching me. That was great! It definitely kept me going!



Q: I can't believe you were running after getting treatments! Were you pushing yourself at that time? Were you working on going farther or faster or were you just trying to maintain?

A: You know, I felt very strong. A friend of mine joked and said that maybe it was all the steroids they give you during chemo! But I felt like I was racing faster than I am now. I



was training 4-5 days a week. And I was trying to do one fast track or tempo workout per week. My mileage was pretty low. I was doing maybe 25-35 miles per week. There were times when my bones would hurt after the shot in my stomach, and I would take time off, but mostly I felt like I was pushing myself. I do feel like now my times have slowed down, probably as a result of all the surgeries and treatments.

Q: Tell us more about the Helping Hands Website and the Breast Health Care Access Program.

A: In addition to the community helping out me and my family, there was a message board, so I started telling them about my treatments. I wondered if it was too much information for the people, but many people responded that they never knew what cancer or chemo were like. So they encouraged me to keep writing about my experiences. Usually after each treatment or surgery I would write about it, and be very honest. I would tell them how it took me 6 hours to go through chemo or surgery. I'd still try to maintain a sense of humor while being honest with people. It was therapeutic for me, and good for other people to hear. Inevitably you'll know someone who has cancer, and it's good to know what they're going through mentally and physically. I think it helps. As for the Breast Health Care Access Program, that's done through Faulkner Hospital. The program basically funds women who are either uninsured or underinsured so they can get their annual mammogram, chemotherapy, or if they need a babysitter so they can go to treatments... I think it's a great program because I think everyone should have access to the screening even if they don't have insurance. So in 2010, my husband and I both ran for the program to raise money. Another year when I couldn't run due to foot surgery, they gave me four numbers, and four of my friends ran in my place.

Q: What healthy habits have you adapted since being diagnosed?

A: We mainly eat the same. We eat a lot of fruits, vegetables, and salads. We eat organic when possible. I already had a very healthy diet going into this. I try to eat in moderation. I have a couple of glasses of wine each week. I keep up with the exercise. I know a lot of women go into this overweight, or they eat a lot of fried food, and it's a life transforming event for them.

Q: When you were first diagnosed, how did you deal with the news? Did you crumble, take the bull by the horns, or something in between?

A: It was a combination of the two. In those first 48 hours as I was driving home with an ice pack in my bra I just couldn't believe I was going through this. I was in denial. I thought they got the wrong chart. Then when we went away for the two weeks, the distance seemed to help. I was really nervous, but when you have kids, you know you have to

get through it for them. Then when I went through chemo, I was there every day for 7 weeks so it becomes like a family. That's also what makes it hard once you stop because you make all these bonds with these amazing women, and then you're done.

Q: How do you balance training and motherhood?

A: After I drop off the kids at school, I go out for a run. Even on the weekends I try to run early before they're awake. My two youngest joined a local track and cross country program. I think my kids know that I'm happier if I've gotten in my run for the day. So everyone is happier! Especially if I'm out there running for 3 hours, training for a marathon, I don't want to do it during the peak times when they need me.

Q: How has cancer affected your running?

A: Something that I've been dealing with is this neuropathy. It went away for a while after the treatments, but now it's come back with a vengeance. It often happens to people who deal with diabetes. I get tingling in one leg. Also, now I'm running slower. Now my 5K pace is my marathon pace. At first I was disappointed, but now I think, I'm here. I'm running. Now I go to races and enjoy the camaraderie, and I'm glad to be participating. Speed doesn't count anymore!

Q: What is a typical workout week like for you? How much do you run (miles) and what else do you do for your body?

A: I feel like I have very low mileage now.

I don't go over 40 miles per week because I just feel like my body gets tired. I do one organized speed run per week with a group of friends one town over. I was never much of a gym person, so at home 3-5 days a week, I try to do light weights and stretching. Sometimes I walk with friends. In the summer I'll swim in a lake or pool, but not much else. It's mainly the running and stretching to prevent injury.

Q: What are you working on now? Any big races?

A: I used to work full time, but now I help my husband with a consulting business, and I do volunteer work for the Susan G. Komen Massachusetts Affiliate. As for races, before I fell and broke my rib, I signed up to do a marathon in New Hampshire at the end of September. I wanted to qualify for Boston again. Then I couldn't start running until early July, so I've been doing an abridged marathon training program. I will keep you posted! In October I'll run the Komen 5K race. I'm also on a committee for the Wellesley Thanksgiving Turkey Trot. I'm not running it, just putting it together. Half of the proceeds will go to the Greater Boston Food Bank, and half will go to a local breast cancer charity. I've always wanted to bring a Thanksgiving Day race to my hometown.

Q: Where can people go to read more about you and your experiences?

A: The Helping Hands Website is where you can read about my experiences with breast cancer. www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/61689

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Name: Carol Chaoui

Q: Favorite running song and the artist/band

When I run on the treadmill, I watch music DVDs by Adelle, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Wyclef Jean, 'Beyonce', Marc Anthony, Eric Clapton, and Bob Marley's son.

Q: Favorite time of day to run

Earlier in the day

Q: How do you prefer to train?

alone (usually)

with a partner (when training for a marathon)

in a group (on Wednesdays)

Q: Most scenic place you've ever run

Lakeside and countryside in Switzerland

Q: Average miles per run

5-7 miles

Q: Where do you usually run?

treadmill

outside

Q: What do you do while running?

listen to music

watch TV

talk

think

other

Q: Favorite running gadget or gear

my Garmin

Q: Why did you start running?

to get in shape

to get back to pre-pregnancy weight

for fun

for sport

other

Q: Favorite race distance

5K

10K

1/2 marathon

marathon

ultramarathon

5K (fast race, quick recovery)
and marathon (can reflect on life.)

PRAISE TO THE SOCCER MOM

I think I finally get the whole soccer Mom persona. When you are a Mom you have to redefine your entire life. Previous to children the rewards are all about you. You get paid for your job; you get a raise when you do well; you may even win employee of the month. You go on vacations, sit by the pool, and bask in the sun while drinking cocktails. You shop for clothes that you don't have to bend over in or worry about staining; you wear make up, do your hair, and wear earrings that if you had a child would be ripped from your ears. You work out whenever you please and so on.

Naturally, or maybe not so, when you become a parent the entire focus shifts onto your children. There is no more "me time" or very little. Your "me time" is 5 minutes here while kids are eating, during nap time (if they nap), or after they go to bed. There are a precious few hours where you can surf the net, read, write, watch a grown up show or just sit in silence. Still you may not leave the house, so you find quick little ways to reward yourself - a bite of chocolate here, a cookie there, a hand full of chips, a glass of wine. All of which add up to an extra 15 pounds. That's a whole baby you're carrying around. The extra 15 pounds completely changes your perspective. You feel just a bit dumpy so even if you had the time to shower, put on make or do your hair, you don't. Sweats and a T-shirt become your uniform because you can bend over in them without showing the



“When you become a parent the entire focus shifts onto your children.”

world your crack, and if your child gets sick on you... oh well.

I remember thinking to myself before children, “I will never look like a dumpy mom”. I can still hear my annoying pre-child voice now. Here I am four years later looking dumpy as ever wanting to change but a small part of me thinking that would be selfish to actually want something for myself. I used to cling onto anything from my past that was “anti-Mom” for example, my car. I refused to get a mini van because I just could not even go there. Now I find myself wishing I had one because they are so practical.

“Previous to children the rewards are all about you.”

What I'm trying to say is that I get it. Moms are just in search of a small reward - a little “employee of the month” in the form of chocolate, chips, or a glass of wine. In the long run this is no reward at all but rather your mind telling you it's so. Yes, it is true. You are no longer the picture in your life but rather the frame, but keep reminding

yourself that the frame enhances the picture. No masterpiece has an ugly, ratty run down frame. A masterpiece needs and thrives on having a beautiful well maintained frame. On that note, the next time you go to pick up the indulgence of the day, don't beat yourself up for partaking in the prize but remember that the real reward is framing your masterpiece with true beauty from the inside out.

“You are no longer the picture in your life but rather the frame, but keep reminding yourself that the frame enhances the picture.”

Lisa McClellan is currently living and running in Southern California. She has been running for over 22 years but became more competitive seven years ago after the birth of her first son. She suffered from post-partum depression and started running because she noticed that it reduced the symptoms of the PPD. Since starting back, she has run 3 marathons, 5 half marathons and most recently a 50K trail ultra marathon. Lisa qualified for the Boston Marathon in March of 2012, is a RRCA certified running coach, and an ambassador for both FitFluent and Team Tough Chik. She is as passionate about writing her blog runwiki.org as she is about running. It is a place for her to journal, share and inspire others with her love of running, cooking and parenting. Lisa's future goals are to improve her marathon time, run the Boston Marathon and then focus on the 50K distance. She is the mother of three children including a set of twins and wife to a US Navy Diver.



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MOMS ON THE RUN: CHANGING LIVES, STRIDE BY STRIDE

BY TRACY L. YODER

In 2007, Karissa Johnson was quite content with her part-time personal training business which allowed her to stay home with three young children. But she found it difficult to find the time to get in her own workout and suddenly she understood the “no time” excuse she had heard over the years from her own mom clients. Finally understanding the difficult balance that moms have, Johnson designed a program that could meet the needs of active moms.

“When women drove from up to an hour away to run with her group, she realized there was a need beyond her own community.”



That next spring, an idea became reality when Moms on the Run kicked off its very first season with 26 women in the small town of Forest Lake, MN. It was designed for all fitness levels, but it was especially created to move even the most inactive woman towards a lifestyle change and the ability to complete a 5K race. When women drove from up to an hour away to run with her group, she realized there was a need beyond her own community.

Just four years later, there are over 550 women enrolled in Moms on the Run, with its hub in the Minneapolis Twin Cities area. About 90 percent are moms – or grandmothers – and most

are new to running. Training sites are based in 15+ locations in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro and Wisconsin, and participants include beginner runners, intermediates and even walkers.

Moms on the Run is an 18-week training program with sessions held 2-3 times per week for approximately one hour in duration. Sessions are interval based, with many ladies using run/walk intervals, and gradually increasing their running over time. After 30 minutes of interval training, the rest of the class is devoted to strength training, stretching, education, and nutrition. Sessions are held at local parks and trails, and led by a certified head coach and assistant coaches.

A 5K race is a goal for many of the women who sign up for Moms on the Run, which costs between \$200 - \$250 for the 18-week summer program and \$125-\$139 for the 9-week fall session. Participants train for races at all distances, and in 2012, over 30 Moms on the Run participants will compete in the Women's Running Magazine Lady Speed Stick Half-Marathon in Bloomington, MN, part of their national race series.

"While I can't explain the phenomenal growth we are experiencing, what I do know is that women's lives are changing. More than running, we promote nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices. Moms are getting in shape again and accomplishing athletic goals. Moms are making new friends. Moms are getting the social outlet they need and having fun breaking a sweat," states Johnson.

.....
 "She credits much of her success to Moms on the Run which gave her the accountability and structure she needed to lose the weight."

In an effort to manage the finances, marketing, administration, and exponential growth, Johnson launched a franchise structure in 2012 that would allow fitness-minded and business-savvy women to own their own small business. Now there is an opportunity to launch a Moms on the Run site in any community across the United States.

Katie Stringer was a stay-at-home mom who always struggled with her weight. She had maintained a size 12/14 through high school and college but by the time she met her husband, she weighed about 225 pounds and was a size 18. After moving to Minnesota for her husband's job, Katie became homesick and quickly added on another 30 pounds. Now weighing 255 pounds, Katie became pregnant and soon after having her first child, had another.

In the spring of 2011, Katie first heard about Moms on the Run and promptly signed up. In the 18 months since she began her weight loss journey, Katie has lost 90 pounds through her new commitment to nutrition and exercise. She credits much of her success to Moms on the Run which gave her the accountability and structure she needed to lose the weight. "For a non-athlete to become a runner at age 31 is amazing to me," states Stringer. "I have run several 5K's, and I am training for a half-marathon in November!" "Though most name weight loss as the primary reason for joining, the relationships built among the women members keep them coming back," says Johnson. Many meet for girl's night out and have developed lasting friendships.

"There just seems to be a really big market for women runners right now, especially mothers trying to find that balance. They hear 'Moms on the Run,' and it's something they can relate to," states Johnson. "But I never realized it would go this far. We definitely aren't done growing yet."

Check out Moms on the Run by visiting the website: www.MomsOnTheRun.com.
 For franchise opportunities, contact TwinCities@momsoutherun.com.
 Check us out on Facebook: [Facebook.com/MomsAreOnTheRun](https://www.facebook.com/MomsAreOnTheRun)

ASK THE PT

So now that the Olympics are over we can all go back to feeling better about our bodies. I swear I tried to run and swim on the same day and I thought I was literally going to die. People in London would have been laughing their butts off and for good reason, for as much as we run, train, and stretch it is nothing compared to the laser focused intensity of an Olympic athlete. They endure the pain; we try to avoid it. But no fear, that does not mean as we head into the latter part of the year that we can not look like an Olympic athlete with a few tweaks to our preparation before running.

The most important and almost overlooked muscles in the human body are the core musculature. Now what truly defines the core muscles? They are basically the sexy six-packs you see on so many of our athletes. The rectus and transverse abdominus muscles are muscles that define your six-pack. The great cuts of muscles that look like they can slice vegetables are called your oblique muscles. Combining all of these together gives you the look that you are made of granite. But they also serve as the anchor to your upper and lower extremities. A strong group of core muscles prevents back injuries, increases flexibility, and allows you to maintain better overall posture. Think of your strong set of core muscles as a protective armor shielding you from potential injury.

So how is an everyday runner supposed to compete with that? It's easier than you think. Here are some

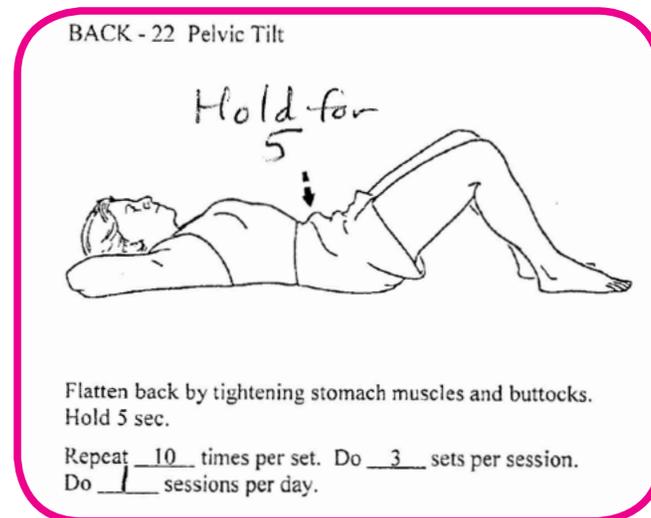


“The most important and almost overlooked muscles in the human body are the core musculature.”



simple everyday exercises that can be the start of you reaching the finish line with a strong core as the prize.

1. Pelvic tilts: Lay on your bed and practice by putting your hands in the small of your back. Gently flatten back against your hands just enough to feel the pressure on your hands from your back. Too much pressure could increase risk of injury and not enough pressure will feel like you are not doing anything. After holding for a count of 5, gently release. Repeat 20-30 times, each time holding for a count of 5.



2. Bridges: In a simple world, these are called butt lifts. Start with a pelvic tilt and gently squeeze your buttocks together and lift your butt gently off the table. Hold for a count of 5, and slowly release back down. 20-30 times.

3. Marching: Start with a pelvic tilt and while holding that tilt, gently bring the right leg up approximately 2 inches and then down. Then bring the left leg up approximately 2 inches and then down. Repeat 20-30 times. The key to this exercise is to keep holding that tilt through the duration of the exercise.

4. Clam exercise: Ok, so this one is really a hip and specifically a gluteal exercise, but a firm butt and hip help immensely with ease of running. Lie on the left or right side and bend your legs to about half of the fetal position. Both of your legs should be on top of each other at this point. Gently lift your top knee off of the bottom one. Hold it for 5 seconds and bring it back down. Repeat 20-30 times.

“Think of your strong set of core muscles as a protective armor shielding you from potential injury.”

TRUNK STABILITY - 9 Bridging

Slowly raise buttocks from floor, keeping stomach tight. Hold 5 sec.
Repeat 10 times per set. Do 3 sets per session.
Do _____ sessions per day.

TRUNK STABILITY - 16 Bent Knee Lift (Prone)

Abdomen and head supported, bend knee and slowly raise hip. Avoid arching low back.
Repeat 10 times per set. Do 3 sets per session.
Do _____ sessions per day.

TRUNK STABILITY - 10 Unilateral Isometric Hip Flexion

Tighten stomach and raise one knee to outstretched arm. Push gently, keeping arm straight, trunk rigid. Hold 5 seconds.
Repeat 10 times per set. Do 3 sets per session.
Do _____ sessions per day.

BACK - 18 Knee-to-Chest Stretch: Unilateral

With hand behind knee, pull knee in to chest until a comfortable stretch is felt in lower back and buttocks. Keep back relaxed. Hold 5 seconds. Alternate to opposite leg.
Repeat 10 times per set. Do 1 sets per session.
Do 1 sessions per day.

BACK - 19 Knee-to-Chest Stretch: Bilateral

With hands behind knees, pull both knees in to chest until a comfortable stretch is felt in lower back and buttocks. Keep back relaxed. Hold 5 seconds.
Repeat 10 times per set. Do 1 sets per session.
Do 1 sessions per day.

TRUNK STABILITY - 15 Advanced Straight Leg Raise

With knees and hips bent up and feet elevated from floor, slowly straighten leg, at the same time brings both arms overhead. Keep stomach tight. ("dying bug")
Repeat 10 times per set. Do 3 sets per session.
Do 1 sessions per day.

Everyone has a hidden inner core. It is just digging deep to find it! Hopefully this is the start of a rock solid core workout for you and your running friends!

Eric Tomei is a physical therapist who has been in orthopedic practice for 10 years. He currently works in Rochester, MI as a staff physical therapist and truly enjoys shaping the health of all his patients. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, a Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences and a Masters Degree in Physical Therapy from Oakland University. His passions include: Real estate investing, physical fitness, and volunteering for various charities in the metro Detroit area.



“Running has made being depressed impossible.
If I’m going through something emotional and just
go outside for a run, you can rest assured
I’ll come back with clarity.”

- Alanis Morissette, singer and actress

This Mother Can Run