Beginning Women's Running Group

Safety on the Road

1 - DON'T WEAR HEADSETS. Use your ears to be aware of your surroundings. Using headphones, you lose the use of an important sense: your hearing.

2 - Always stay alert and aware of what's going on around you. The more aware you are, the less vulnerable you are.

3 - Carry a cell phone or change for a phone call. Know the locations of call boxes and telephones along your regular route. ICE (in case of emergency)

4 - Trust your intuition about a person or an area. React on your intuition and avoid a person or situation if you're unsure. If something tells you a situation is not "right", it isn't.

5 - Alter or vary your running route pattern; run in familiar areas if possible. Know where open businesses or stores are located.

6 - Run with a partner. Run against traffic so you can observe approaching automobiles.

7 - Write down or leave word of the direction of your run. Tell friends and family of your favorite running routes.

8 - Avoid unpopulated areas, deserted streets, and overgrown trails. Especially avoid unlit areas, especially at night. Run clear of parked cars or bushes.

9 - Carry identification or write your name, phone number, and blood type on the inside sole of your running shoe. Include any medical information. Don't wear jewelry.

10 - Ignore verbal harassment. Use discretion in acknowledging strangers. Look directly at others and be observant, but keep your distance and keep moving.

11 - Wear reflective material if you must run before dawn or after dark.

12 - CALL POLICE IMMEDIATELY if something happens to you or someone else, or you notice anyone out of the ordinary. It is important to report incidents immediately.

Before You Leave for your Run

- Plan your outing. Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return. Tell friends and family of your favorite exercise routes.
- Know where telephones are located along the course.
- Wear an identification tag or carry a driver's license. If you don't have a place to carry your ID, write your name, phone number and blood type on the inside of your athletic shoe. Include any medical information.
- Don't wear jewelry or carry cash.
- Wear reflective material.

Dog Defense

Runners and walkers often encounter unfamiliar dogs. When this happens, our initial impulse is to turn and run. This is, however, not the appropriate reaction when confronted by an unfamiliar or threatening dog. Such movement can trigger the chase instinct in dogs. Take the following precautions when encountering a dog:

- Stand very still and try to be calm.
- Don't scream at the dog.
- Be aware of where the dog is. Look in its general direction, but don't meet its gaze. A dog perceives this as an aggressive challenge.
- Allow the dog to sniff you.
- In a low voice, calmly say, “No, go home.”
- Don't move until the dog leaves.
- If a dog does attack, try to “feed” it your jacket or other item of clothing.
- If you are knocked down or fall, curl into a ball and keep your hands over your ears and face. Try not to scream or roll around.

IF CONFRONTED BY AN ATTACKER

- Run toward populated areas, busy streets, and open businesses.
- Ignore jeers and verbal harassment. Keep moving.
- Use discretion in acknowledging strangers. Be friendly, but keep your distance and keep moving.
- Do not approach a car to give directions, or the time of day. Point toward the nearest police or information source, shrug your shoulders, but keep moving. If you feel you must respond, do it while moving.
- Do not panic. Do not run toward a more isolated area.

IF ATTACKED

- Keep as calm as possible. Try to fix a description of the attacker in your mind.
- Do not show fear or plead - this intensifies aggression in most cases.
- Try to talk to the aggressor and look for an escape opportunity - a moment of indecision or distraction on the attacker's part.
- Do not fight or struggle with the attacker unless there is clearly no other way out, especially if you are untrained in self defense.