

Close Window

Send To Printer

Article Launched: 7/09/2006 08:51 PM

fitness

Adjust for runs outdoors

Q & A | Fitness Magazine

DenverPost.com

Q: Why does it seem so much harder to run outside than on the treadmill?

A: Because it is harder. Sure, many people tend to go at an easier pace on the treadmill than when they're pounding the pavement (engrossed in "Saved by the Bell" reruns, perhaps?). But there is a scientific reason behind your shortness of breath in the great outdoors.

"When you're running on a treadmill, the conveyor belt does some of the work for you, but when you're running outside, your body has to propel itself forward without any motorized help," says Jason Karp, a professional running coach in Albuquerque. There's also more air resistance when you're sweating outside, plus there's usually a slight incline or decline. (When you are hitting the treadmill, keep the incline at 1.0 to simulate an outdoor environment.)

Regular training will increase the blood flow to your muscles and bolster your strength, making outdoor running easier over time. If you need to build up stamina when running outside, reduce your usual treadmill time by a third; do this for two weeks, then tack on an extra five to 10 minutes. Again, give yourself a two-week adjustment period before upgrading.

Go to fitnessmagazine.com/exercisetips for other hot-weather workout suggestions.

Q: Which is better for plaque removal, waxed or unwaxed floss?

A: "There is no difference whatsoever in terms of getting teeth clean. So it's really a matter of personal preference and comfort," says Alexandra Hara, D.M.D., a general and cosmetic dentist in New York City.

Here are some tips:

For teeth that are close together, opt for waxed floss, which will slide most easily between snug spaces.

If your teeth are not so close together, choose taped floss, which is thicker than the traditional kind, cleans more surface area and requires less force.

For sensitive gums, pick unwaxed floss, since it's softer and less abrasive (though it doesn't slide as easily between tight spaces).

Q: Call me a diet veteran: I've tried everything. But every time I lose weight, I gain it right back. Are some people just doomed to be overweight forever?

A: Not doomed, but predisposed. Genetics, your metabolism, your behavior and, in rare cases, a thyroid disorder can all affect your weight, says Milton Stokes, spokesman for the American Dietetic Association. Aim to lose and keep off 10 percent of your excess body fat - you'll feel better and reduce your risk of many chronic diseases.