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Clinic helps runners improve technique

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The free clinic is offered the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 2-4 p.m. in Gruber Fitness Center.

Spc. Amelia Sharpe, MAHC physical therapy technician, said the Pose Method addresses and resolves many technical issues related to form that can cause running injuries and slower times. She said that the physical posture a runner assumes is important to the entire process of running.

"We encourage beginners to avoid running flat-footed or striking the heel to the ground first while running," Sharpe said. "The proper pose to assume during the act of running is similar to literally falling forward while keeping both feet under the main body mass."

Pose Method running is a detailed system especially designed for teaching human movement and sport-specific techniques that was primarily developed by former Olympic coach Dr. Nicholas Romanov in 1977. The name of the method comes from how the body is posed during each movement while running and not positioned in relation to its location.

Spc. Melicia Graham-Courtney, a culinary specialist from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Joint Regional Correctional Facility, attended the clinic to learn the Pose Method to return to her personal level of physical fitness required to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test.

"I am attending this clinic as part of my program to prepare for passing my APFT," Graham-Courtney said. "I recently gave birth. This class helps ensure that I am training properly."

Moniká McDwyer, a military spouse, had been running half marathons and was recently injured while training. She attended the clinic with the goal to resume training next week.

"I injured myself by building miles too quickly while training after my last race," McDwyer said. "Since coming back, I've made a point to stay within the medical guidance of my physical therapist. And, depending upon the progress toward healing I've made, I hope to begin a run-walk program. The last half marathon I ran was this past October."

Sharpe said the running pose is a whole body pose, which vertically aligns shoulders, hips and ankles with the support leg, while standing on the ball of the foot. This creates an S-like shape of the body. The technique inherently creates a forward movement of the body, with the least use of energy, and the least physical effort to maintain momentum.

"In this method, the runner changes pose from one leg to the other by falling forward and allowing gravity to do the work," Sharpe said. "The support foot is then pulled from the ground to allow the body to fall forward, while the other foot drops down freely, in a change of support."

In addition to teaching the technique, Sharpe provided the two clinic participants with guidance regarding precautionary measures that help prevent common running injuries.

"Listen to your body. Don't over do it or ignore pain. Before beginning a running routine, create a running plan that is in line with your current fitness abilities and long-term goals," Sharpe said. "Warm-up and stretch before and after running — especially calf, hamstrings, groin and quadriceps."

The Pose Running Clinic began in July 2016 and is used with MAHC physical therapy patients in addition to being offered as a stand-alone clinic at Gruber.

Serving as a physical therapy technician, Sharpe said she works under the direction of a doctor who is a physical therapist. Following medical referral, she supervises or administers physical therapy to decrease physical disabilities.

"A large part of my work is to promote physical fitness of patients through initiatives like the Pose Running Clinic. I really enjoy my job," Sharpe said. "We help improve readiness by treating soldiers in the areas of physical fitness, physical training and injury prevention."

The Pose Running Clinic is free and open to anyone who has authorized access to post. For more information or to participate, call 684-6338.



PHOTO/ PRUDENCE SIEBERT, FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

Spc. Amelia Sharpe, physical therapy technician at Munson Army Health Center, right, instructs running clinic participants Moniká McDwyer, military spouse, and Spc. Melicia Graham-Courtney, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Joint Regional Correctional Facility, in exercises to improve their running form during a running clinic Jan. 17 at Gruber Fitness Center. The Pose Method running clinic is offered to anyone who would like to improve running form at 2 p.m. the first and third Tuesdays of each month. The clinic is currently meeting at the racquetball court in Gruber Fitness Center. Photo by Prudence Siebert/Fort Leavenworth Lamp

