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On Thanksgiving Morning
The Turkey Chase Charity Race is Back In-Person for its 40th Anniversary
YMCA Nutrition and Fitness Experts Share Top 10 Turkey Chase 10k Race Tips

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington and the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary are hosting the 40th anniversary of the Turkey Chase Charity Race, and YMCA fitness and nutrition experts (bios below) compiled their Top 10 10k Tips to help participants stay safe and healthy up to and through the largest 10k in Montgomery County.

Top 10 Turkey Chase 10k Race Tips

1. Runners should be running 2-3 times per week, with at least one 4-5 mile run a week for 4+ weeks before a 10K. If not, do the 2 mile run, or do the virtual event, spreading mileage out over time.
2. In the weeks before the race, look for ways to cut fat and added sugar. Carrying extra weight makes the race that much harder.
3. Prepare for cold weather. Wear a winter coat until just before the race and hand it off to a family member near the starting line. Start the race wearing removable items, like hats and gloves, that can be stashed in a pocket during the race. Light jackets can be tied around your waist. Neck gaiters keep your neck warm and can keep cold air out of your lungs.
4. “Carbloading” the night before doesn’t help for shorter races like these, since those calories only kick in after about 90 minutes of exercise. Better to eat light and nutritious foods, and drink enough water the night before and the morning of. Only eat only foods you know will sit well with you. (This is not the time to begin some new cruciferous vegetable diet!)
5. Wearing high-quality running shoes that are well broken in – no new shoes!
6. Avoid injury by warming up with a walk or light jog before the race, adding dynamic stretches (moving through the stretch) once you’re limber. Static stretches, where you hold a stretch position, are good for after the race while you’re doing your cool-down jog.
7. Remember it’s a holiday. Take it fairly easy. Gauge your cardiovascular activity levels using the talk test. If you’re not able to say more than a sentence out loud while running, slow down.
8. There’s a good number of hills in the middle of this race, so conserve your energy in the beginning. Don’t go fast on the downhill so you can avoid injury and catch your breath.
9. A bit after the race, but well before dinner, get some healthy calories in you. Whole grain breads and fresh fruit are a great way to recover.
10. If you hurt yourself, (sprained ankle, twisted knee etc.) STOP RUNNING. The damage caused by running on an injury can take weeks or even months to heal. Better to stop for the day, get checked out, and switch to a low-impact activity, so you have time to heal properly.

Meet the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington's Experts!

- **Nutrition** -- Caroline Schmalz is the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington’s Community Dietitian. She is a registered, licensed dietitian nutritionist providing nutrition counseling and chronic disease prevention services to communities across the DMV.
- **Exercise** -- Keith Smith is an American College of Sports Medicine Certified Personal Trainer and a Road Runners Club of America Level 1 Run Coach, who, at the age of 41, has also completed 41 triathlons. Keith got into running later in life after neglecting his health for years while he had a desk job. He is now at YMCA Healthy Heart Ambassador and a Les Mills Body Pump instructor.

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