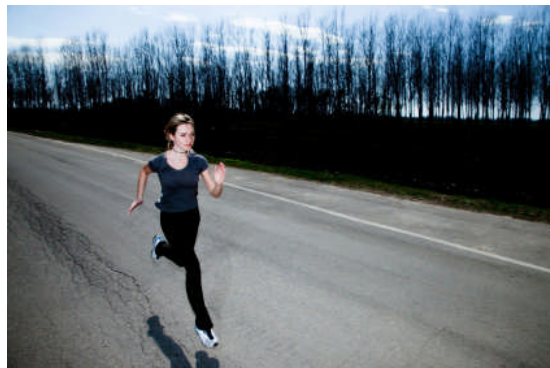




University of Colorado Hospital

Top 5 Myths About Women's Health and Running

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Often times women get their health care information from the girlfriend network. Some times that information can be damaging to your health. If you are a runner there are a few important myths you should know about.

Myth 1

If I'm not getting my period, that means I'm training at just the right level.

Athletic amenorrhea is the loss or absence of a normal period with increased amounts of training. This is not a healthy sign for anything. Loss of one's period is most commonly a sign that the amount of energy out (training) is exceeding the amount of energy in (food). This leads to an energy imbalance that lowers the amount of estrogen in the body.

Myth 2

If I'm not trying to get pregnant, who needs a period?

You do. A woman's period that occurs regularly approximately every 28 days, is a good indicator of health. Normal hormone levels are necessary for normal bone health and cardiovascular health.

Myth 3

You can only injure bone with a huge amount of force like from a fall from a height or getting hit by a car.

While we usually think of fractures to bone as occurring with a huge amount of force, such as in falls from heights or major accidents and collisions. Injury to bone can also occur as a result of repetitive and cumulative stress to the bone over weeks and months. This type of injury to bone is called a stress fracture.

Myth 4

If I have a good mileage base, I can increase my volume by 30% per week with no risk of injury.

A stress fracture typically occurs when there has been an increase in intensity or duration of running by greater than 10% per week. Basically, this concept can be understood as "doing too much, too soon." This increase in repetitive stress overwhelms the bone's ability to repair itself and results in a stress fracture of the bone.

Myth 5

If I am a runner, there's no chance that my bones are too thin.

Actually, if you are a runner who has:

- ❖ a history of low calcium intake (lactose intolerant, celiac sprue, don't like milk or cheese or believe it makes you fat),
- ❖ Absent or irregular periods

- ❖ Suffered from an eating disorder or disordered eating (use of laxatives or very restrictive about energy (food) intake, you are at increased risk of having bones that are too thin i.e., osteopenia or osteoporosis.

Active people of all ages get injured from time to time. Dr Saint-Phard and the CU Sports Medicine team treat both competitive and recreational athletes for sports related injuries. From prevention to training to advanced surgery, our experienced team of doctors can provide comprehensive care for a wide range of injuries. At WISH, we now have expertise in women's health as it pertains to active and athletic women and girls. If you have loss of function because something hurts in your bones, muscles or joints, Dr. Saint-Phard can help evaluate and formulate a plan for you to regain optimal function. We look forward to helping you achieve your goals of staying active and healthy. It our goal to get you back on the go as quickly as possible.

About the Doctor



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Dr. Saint-Phard is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation, sports medicine, and pain medicine. As the director of CU Women's Sports Medicine, her clinical interests are providing expert sports and spine care to active and athletic women and girls. In 2007, 2008, and 2009, Dr. Saint-Phard was named one of the Best Doctors in America® by Best Doctors, Inc. ®. Dr. Saint-Phard is also a former elite athlete. She competed in the shot put at the 1987 World Championships in Rome, Italy and in the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea. She was ranked Top 20 in the world.

For more information about CU Women's Sports Medicine visit our website at:

<http://www.uch.edu/conditions/bones-joints-muscle/sportsmedicine/>

To request an appointment with Dr. Saint Phard consider two locations:

- ❖ **Beginning September 2011, Dr Saint-Phard will see patients at
The Women's Integrated Services in Health (WISH) clinic
Call 720-848-9474 or go to www.wishforwomen.org**
- ❖ **To request an appointment at Colorado Blvd and I 25 call 720-848-8200**