

Running Tips: Blisters, Sore Nipples and Other Runner's Skin Problems Solved



By Kimberly A. Daly

For runners, friction might as well be a four-letter word. It's the cause of most training-induced [skin](#) injuries, says Brooke Jackson, M.D. a dermatologist and 10-time marathoner in Chicago. Here, her best tips for four very icky (but surprisingly common) issues.

Skin Problem: My [heart rate monitor](#) strap chafes.

Solution: As sweat builds under the band, your heart rate monitor can start to slip and abrade your skin. "You could stop wearing one or quit sweating," jokes Jackson. Since those options aren't realistic, she suggests lubing up before buckling into your strap with a water-resistant balm like Body Glide Chafing Stick (\$7; [drugstore.com](#)).

Skin Problem: A waistband is rubbing me the wrong way.

Solution: It's hard to tell how clothes are going to feel several minutes into a [workout](#) until you've actually taken them for a test spin. Which is why Jackson reminds her patients: "No new clothes on race day!" Cut out tags and check your pants for any stitching that might irritate [your body](#). If it's a regular issue for you, coat your skin with Mission Skincare High-Performance Anti-Friction Cream (\$10; [missionskincare.com](#)) before hitting the roads.

Skin Problem: I have a blister—now what?

Solution: First, deal with the boo-boo. "Sanitize a needle by swiping it with alcohol or running it through a flame," says Jackson. Use the point to puncture the blister, allow the fluid to drain, and cover it with a bandage like Band-Aid Advanced [Healing Blister](#) (\$4; [drugstore.com](#)). Then, buy new socks. Look for seamless styles made with moisture-wicking materials that fit snugly. "They're less likely to cause hot spots than traditional cotton ones," says Jackson. A good pair: Feetures Pure Comfort Ultra Light No Show Tab (\$13; [feeturesbrand.com](#)).

Skin Problem: My nipples are red and sore.

Solution: Common for dudes (who hasn't seen that guy in a bloody t-shirt at the finish line?), your girls can experience this one too—especially if you put them in a too-tight sports bra. One that fits well is less likely to allow jiggle, stopping irritation before it starts. Try on lots of styles and sizes next time you're shopping and steer clear of cotton fabrics. And don't underestimate the power of Aquaphor Healing Ointment (\$6; [drugstore.com](#)), says Jackson: "Swiping on a little really helps."



Kimberly A. Daly is a staff writer at SHAPE magazine. She has also held positions at Glamour, Fitness, and Good Housekeeping. Kim loves to read, write, and run. When she's not flipping through the latest issue of National Geographic or putting together a health or beauty article, you can find her doing laps of New York City's Central Park. Check out her blog [Running With It](#) on [shape.com](#).