



14th INTERNATIONAL THESSALONIKI NIGHT HALF MARATHON

& Health and Power Walking Races 10km, 5km & Social Offer Mile

ZēniΘ

Κορυφαία ενέργεια.



**RUN the Night
FEEL the City**

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTIONS

**17th OCTOBER
2026**

Thessaloniki
NIGHT Run
THE ORIGINAL



www.thesshalfmarathon.org | info@thesshalfmarathon.org

A. OFFICIAL PRESENTATION – PRESS CONFERENCE**OF THE RACE PROGRAMME & PARALLEL EVENTS****Monday, October 12th 2026, Amphitheater HVT School AKMI (Tsimiski 14), 12:00**

REGISTRATION CENTER: TIF - HELEXPO, Pavillion 2

Runners' equipment picking up • Sponsors' competitions • Events

Thursday - Friday 15 - 16/10, hours: 10:00 - 19:00 & Saturday 17/10, hours: 09:00 - 11:00

B. RACE PROGRAM**17:00****1 MILE RACE (social offer mile - 1.609,34m)****START:***Within the Thessaloniki
Port Authority (ThPA S.A.)*

16:00 - 16:30

Expected arrival time of the runners at the Start line

16:40 - 16:50

Handing over runners' personal items at Aristotelous Square

16:50 - 16:55

Placing of the runners at the Start line

17:00**Start**

17:05

Expected finish time of the 1st runner

17:45

1 Mile Road Race Award Ceremony for men and women

17:15

Finishing time limit for 1 Mile Road Race

17:10**HEALTH & POWER WALKING RACE 5km****START:***Within the Thessaloniki
Port Authority (ThPA S.A.)*

16:10 - 16:40

Expected arrival time of the runners at the Start line

16:40 - 16:55

Handing over runners' personal items at Aristotelous Square

16:55 - 17:05

Placing of the runners at the Start line

17:10**Start**

17:25

Expected finish time of the 1st runner

18:00

5km Road Race Award Ceremony for men and women

18:40

Finishing time limit for 5km Road Race

18:40**HEALTH & POWER WALKING RACE 10km****START:***26th October Street
(Central Macedonia Region
area)*

17:40 - 18:10

Expected arrival time of the runners at the Start line

18:10 - 18:25

Handing over runners' personal items on 26th October Street
(Central Macedonia Region)

18:25 - 18:35

Placing of the runners at the Start line

18:40**Start**

19:10

Expected finish time of the 1st runner

20:00

10km Road Race Award Ceremony for men and women

21:40

Finishing time limit for 10km Road Race

19:30**NIGHT HALFMARATHON RACE****START:***26th October Street
(Central Macedonia Region
area)*

18:30 - 19:00

Expected arrival time of the runners at the Start line

19:00 - 19:15

Handing over runners' personal items on 26th October Street
(Central Macedonia Region)

19:15 - 19:25

Placing of the runners at the Start line

19:30**Start**

20:40

Expected finish time of the 1st runner

21:10

Halfmarathon Award Ceremony for men and women

22:30

Finishing time limit for Halfmarathon

AWARDS CEREMONY (ARISTOTELOUS SQUARE)**1 MILE RACE**

17:45 (Men)

17:50 (Women)

10km RACE

20:00 (Men)

20:05 (Women)

5km RACE

18:00 (Men)

18:05 (Women)

HALFMARATHON RACE

21:10 (Men)

21:15 (Women)

BEFORE THE RACE make sure you have the following items

- ✓ Your BIB Number and the safety pins
- ✓ The event's special bag, with the number clearly written on it.

ARRIVAL OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE STARTING POINTS

- > **Halfmarathon:** Start 19:30. All runners must be at the starting point, located on 26th October Street (Central Macedonia Region area) one hour before the start of the Race i.e. at 18:30 hrs.
- > **10.000m.:** Start 18:40. All runners must be at the starting point, located on 26th October Street (Central Macedonia Region area) one hour before the start of the Race, i.e. at 17:40 hrs.
- > **5.000m.:** Start 17:10. All runners must be at the starting point, located within the premises of the Thessaloniki Port Authority (ThPA S.A.), Averof Street, one hour before the start of the Race, i.e. at 16:10 hrs.
- > **1 Mile Race:** Start 17:00. All runners must be at the starting point, located within the premises of the Thessaloniki Port Authority (ThPA S.A.), Averof Street, one hour before the start of the Race, i.e. at 16:00 hrs.

HOW TO GET THERE

All participating runners must proceed to the starting point of the participating Road Race at their own risk.

In accordance with the event's environmental responsibility programme, the Organizing Committee advises runners, attendants and spectators to use public transport – OASTH city buses and the METRO – for their transportation.

OASTH App for Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=oasth.mobile.transport&hl=el>

OASTH App for Apple:

<https://apps.apple.com/gr/app/%CE%BF%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B8/id997693786?l=el>

Metro:

<https://www.thessmetro.gr>

MANAGEMENT OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Runners should place their personal items and clothing in the event's special bag, which they will receive from the Registration Center.

ATTENTION: The BIB number must be clearly written on the special bag, and the bag must not contain any travel documents, valuables, money or medication. The Organizers bear no responsibility for the loss of valuable items. The Organization does not accept runners' personal drinks. No bags or backpacks other than the event's special bags will be accepted at the starting area.

HANDING OVER – PICKING UP PERSONAL ITEMS

- > **Half Marathon:** Runners must hand over the event's special bags at the designated point at the entrance of 26th of October Street (Courthouse area). After finishing, runners can pick up their bag at Aristotelous Square (Finish area) by presenting their BIB number.
- > **10,000m Race:** Runners must hand over the event's special bags at the designated point at the entrance of 26th of October Street (Courthouse area). After finishing, runners can pick up their bag at Aristotelous Square (Finish area) by presenting their BIB number.



- > **5,000m Race:** Runners must hand over the event's special bags at the designated point at Aristotelous Square. After finishing, runners can pick up their bag at the same point by presenting their BIB number.
- > **1 Mile Race:** Runners must hand over the event's special bags at the designated point at Aristotelous Square. After finishing, runners can pick up their bag at the same point by presenting their BIB number.

**Note: The entry gates to the starting blocks for the Half Marathon and the 10km race will open at 17:40. Until then, runners must remain in the warm-up zone for their pre-race preparation.*

***Note: From the bag drop-off point of the Half Marathon and 10km runners up to the starting area of the two Races, there will be a warm-up zone for participating runners (500m zone).*

****Note: Immediately after handing over their bags, runners of the 5km and the 1 Mile Race walk to the starting area of the two Races, within the ThPA premises, warming up on the way.*

LOCKER ROOMS & WARM-UP

Men's and Women's locker rooms will be located on the north-east side of Aristotelous Square.

- The warm-up area for the 21km and 10km runners is located on 26th of October Street and extends from the Courthouse to the starting area of the two Races.
- The warm-up area for the 5km and 1 Mile Race runners extends from Aristotelous Square (after handing over personal items) to the starting area of the two Races within the ThPA premises.

For safety reasons, the area in front of the start arch will remain closed off and clear.

DURING THE RACE

Electronic control and timing carpets for recording runners' times will be placed at:

- > **Half Marathon:** at the Start, the 5th km, the 10th km, the 15th km. and the Finish.
- > **10,000m Race:** at the Start, the 5th km, the 7.5th km and the Finish.
- > **5,000m Race:** at the Start and the Finish.
- > **1 Mile Race:** at the Start and the Finish.
- *The timing of all the points described above will appear in the official results.*
- *Competitors who do not register an electronic reading at the above-mentioned points will not be classified.*
- *The electronic timing chips (chip RFID) are embedded in the BIB numbers.*

ATTENTION

- DO NOT DETACH THE ELECTRONIC TIMING CHIP (CHIP RFID) FROM THE BIB NUMBER.
- PLACE THE BIB NUMBER ON THE FRONT OF YOUR CHEST.
- DO NOT ALTER OR CRUMPLE THE BIB NUMBER IN ANY WAY.
- DO NOT COVER THE BIB NUMBER WITH ANYTHING. IT MUST BE VISIBLE AT THE START AND AT THE FINISH.
- THE REPLICATION, EXCHANGE OR TRANSFER OF THE BIB NUMBER IS NOT ALLOWED.
- THE ORGANIZATION DOES NOT ACCEPT PERSONAL DRINKS FROM PARTICIPATING RUNNERS.
- CONSULT THE EVENT'S RACE REGULATIONS, THE SITE PLANS AND THE MAPS OF THE RACE ROUTES.

FOR ALL RACES OF THE RACE PROGRAMME

- **Chemical toilets:** At the Starts, at the Support Stations along the route and at the Finish.
- **Medical support:** At the Starts and at the Finish. In addition, eleven (11) Medical Stations will be located at selected points along the route to provide fuller support to participating runners.
- **Recovery:** Immediately after the Finish, next to the Medical Station, a Recovery Center and Massage Service will operate for all runners.

FINISHING TIME LIMIT

The finishing time limit for the Half Marathon is three hours, for the 10,000m Health & Power Walking Race 120 minutes, for the 5,000m Health & Power Walking Race 90 minutes and for the 1 Mile Race 15 minutes.

If a runner needs more time than the set limit to complete the race, they must stop. If they decide to continue AT THEIR OWN RESPONSIBILITY, they must move onto the sidewalk.

INFO POINT, MEDICAL COVERAGE & RESULTS

INFO POINT

To facilitate runners and spectators, an Information Center (info point) will operate in the Finish area at Aristotelous Square on Saturday, October 17, from 15:30 to 22:30.

MEDICAL COVERAGE

- In any case, all competitors participate entirely at their own risk.
- The Organizers bear no responsibility for anything that may occur during the race with regard to health issues due to lack of preventive medical screening.
- Participants are advised to have undergone a recent medical examination.
- The Organizers will not request medical certificates from any athlete, since all participants compete at their own exclusive risk and minors under the responsibility of their guardians.
- When collecting your race pack, please declare any particular aspect of your medical history that the event's medical staff should be aware of.

THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE EVENT, WWW.THESSHALFMARATHON.ORG, CONTAINS USEFUL TIPS ON RACE PREPARATION, NUTRITION AND PREVENTIVE MEDICAL SCREENING.

RESULTS – CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION

Unofficial results will be announced online immediately after the end of the races, giving anyone interested the opportunity to submit an objection within five calendar days.

Official results will be announced within fifteen working days. Immediately after the announcement of the official results, runners will be able to print their certificate of participation from the official website of the event, www.thesshalfmarathon.org and www.thesshalfmarathon.gr

Obedying the rules is essential for the safe and equal participation of all runners in this mass sporting event. In addition, mutual understanding and consideration among runners is required. Individual runners as well as groups of runners must respect their fellow athletes, help one another and generally facilitate the smooth conduct of the race.

The Award Ceremonies for the first three male and female winners of the race will take place in the specially designed Finish area, in accordance with the event's detailed race programme. (page 1).

For any information regarding your participation in the event, please visit the official website, email info@thesshalfmarathon.org or call +30 2310 200360.



HALF MARATHON

10km

5km

1 mile

ROUTE SUPPORT MAPS - CENTRAL UNIT OF THESSALONIKI

HALFMARATHON RACE

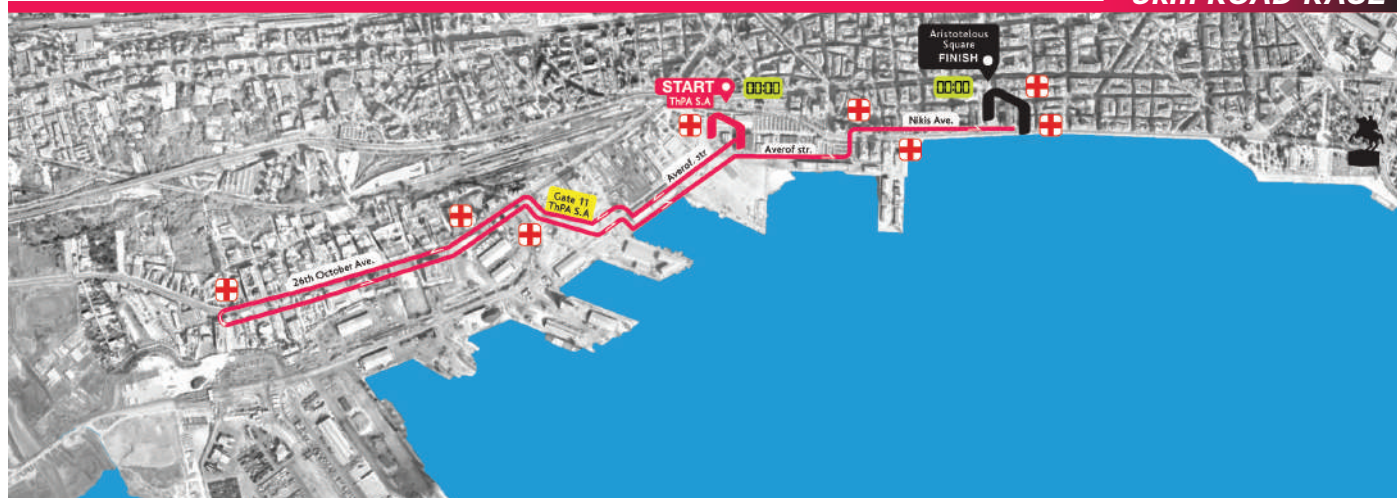


10km ROAD RACE

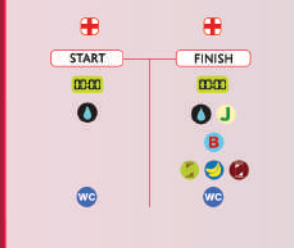


ROUTE SUPPORT MAPS - CENTRAL UNIT OF THESSALONIKI

5km ROAD RACE



5.000m. FEED & SUPPORT ZONES



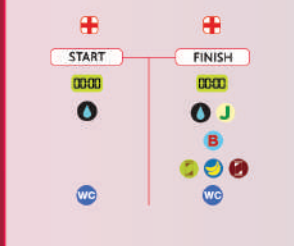
RUNNERS FEED & SUPPORT

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| S Supply Station | W Bottled Water (AYRA) |
| ET Electronic Timing | J Juice (Amita) |
| + Medical Support | B Alcohol free Beer (VERGINA) |
| + Medical Services | PB Protein Bar (Rice up) |
| WC WC | H Halva Bar Haitoglou |
| P Parking Lot | B Banana (CHIKUITA) |
| PI Percussion Instruments | |
| MS Music Spot | |

1 MILE ROAD RACE (FAMILY MILE)



1 MILE FEED & SUPPORT ZONES



RUNNERS FEED & SUPPORT

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| S Supply Station | W Bottled Water (AYRA) |
| ET Electronic Timing | J Juice (Amita) |
| + Medical Support | B Alcohol free Beer (VERGINA) |
| + Medical Services | PB Protein Bar (Rice up) |
| WC WC | H Halva Bar Haitoglou |
| P Parking Lot | B Banana (CHIKUITA) |
| PI Percussion Instruments | |
| MS Music Spot | |

RUNNERS FEED & SUPPORT STATIONS

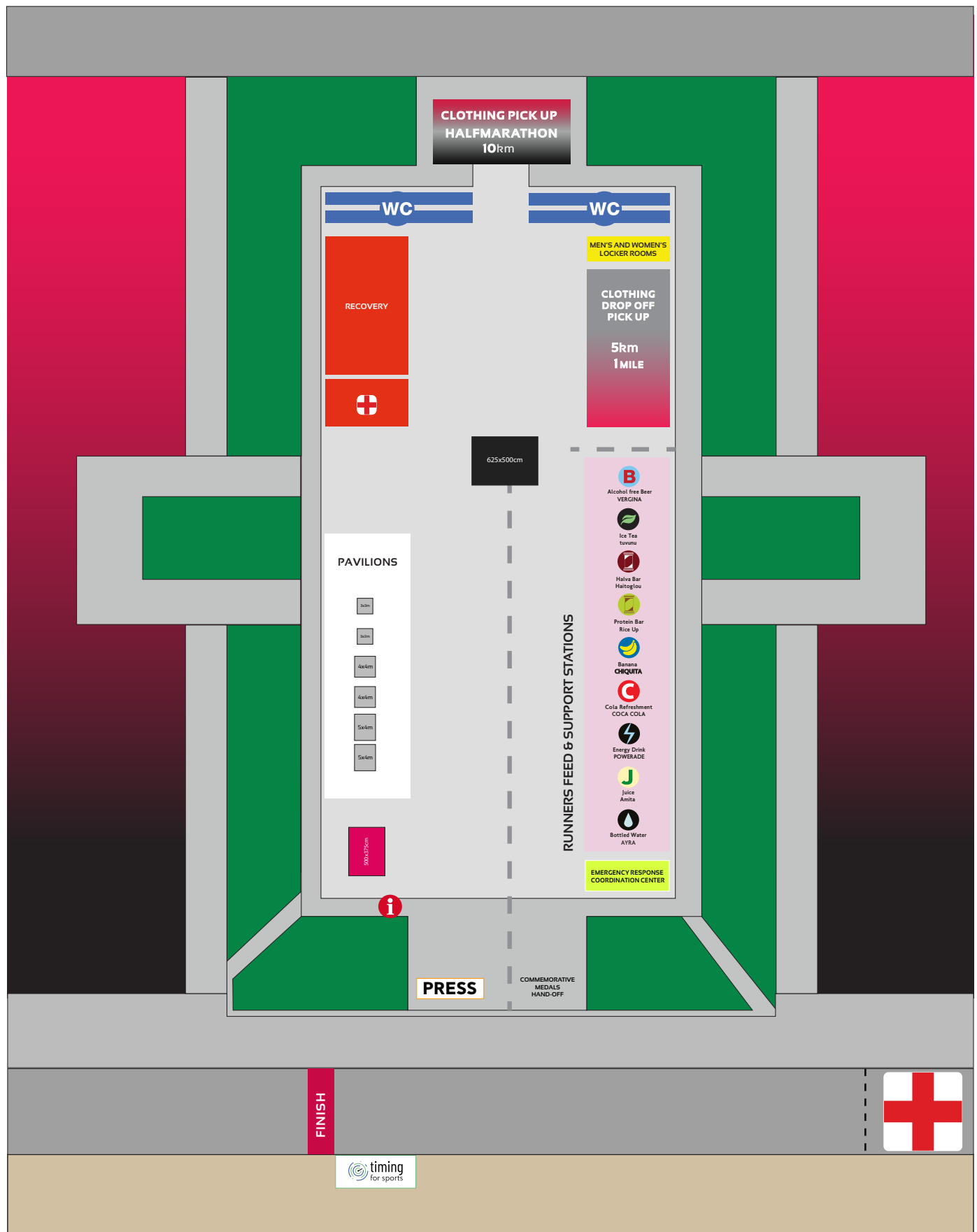
HALFMARATHON	Start	5km	7.5km	10km	12.5km	15km	17.5km	Finish Line
 Bottled Water (AYRA)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Energy Drink (POWERADE)			✓			✓		✓
 Energy Gel (SQUEEZY)				✓				
 Juice (Amita)								✓
 Ice Tea (tuvunu)								✓
 Cola Refreshment (COCA COLA)								✓
 Alcohol free Beer (VERGINA)								✓
 Salted Snack (sticks TSAKIRIS)							✓	
 Protein Bar (Rice Up)								✓
 Halva Bar Haitoglou								✓
 Banana (CHIQUITA)								✓

10km	Start	5km	7.5km	Finish Line
 Bottled Water (AYRA)	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Juice (Amita)				✓
 Alcohol free Beer (VERGINA)				✓
 Banana (CHIQUITA)				✓
 Protein Bar (Rice Up)				✓
 Halva Bar Haitoglou				✓

5km	Start	Finish Line
 Bottled Water (AYRA)	✓	✓
 Juice (Amita)		✓
 Alcohol free Beer (VERGINA)		✓
 Banana (CHIQUITA)		✓
 Protein Bar (Rice Up)		✓
 Halva Bar Haitoglou		✓

1mile	Start	Finish Line
 Bottled Water (AYRA)	✓	✓
 Juice (Amita)		✓
 Alcohol free Beer (VERGINA)		✓
 Banana (CHIQUITA)		✓
 Protein Bar (Rice Up)		✓
 Halva Bar Haitoglou		✓

TOP VIEW OF THE FINISH AREA



INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

The Regional Department of Thessaloniki – Kilkis – Halkidiki of the Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists (PSF), together with the Scientific Department of Sports Physiotherapy (ETAF), hereby provides you with important information regarding injury prevention, preparation for the 14th International Thessaloniki Night Half Marathon – ZeniΘ, as well as guidance on post-race recovery.

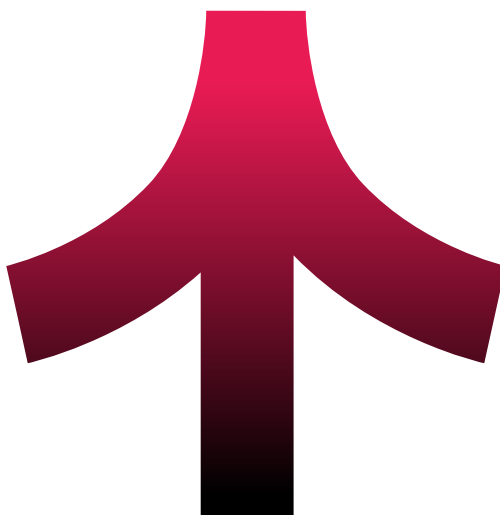


Prevention of Injuries

- Ensure that your footwear and orthotic devices (insoles or supports, if used) are not worn out. Do not wear brand-new athletic shoes on the day of the race; you should have trained in them for at least one to two weeks prior.
- Listen to your body. Do not participate if you are not feeling well.
- During your race preparation, consult your physiotherapist—member of the Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists—if you experience persistent discomfort during or after training sessions, if you suffer from acute pain, or if pain interrupts your sleep at night. Your physiotherapist will help you identify and address any potential issues promptly and safely.
- During the race, physiotherapists who are members of the Association will be present at designated stations along the route as well as at the finish line, to evaluate and manage any musculoskeletal issues that may arise.
- Review the informational leaflet of the Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists on preventing common running injuries and follow the recommended guidelines.
- Avoid dehydration by consuming 400 to 800 ml of electrolyte solution per hour of exercise. Take care not to drink more than your thirst dictates, as excessive fluid intake may lead to hyponatremia. Athletes competing for more than four hours are at higher risk. If you experience confusion, nausea, dizziness, vomiting, or difficulty breathing, seek medical assistance immediately.

Before the Race

- Place protective pads on areas of the feet that are subject to increased friction with footwear in order to prevent blisters.
- Apply petroleum jelly to body areas prone to friction with athletic clothing, such as between the thighs, under the arms, along the inner side of the upper arm, on the biceps, and on the nipples.
- Prepare with a warm-up that includes light running, high-knee exercises, and similar movements. Complement this with dynamic, sport-specific exercises targeting the major muscle groups of the lower limbs.
- After warming up, take care to maintain your body temperature until the race begins by wearing your tracksuit or covering yourself with a thermal blanket.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Right after the Race

- Continue moving for 5–10 minutes after finishing the race. This will help your heart rate gradually return to normal and reduce joint stiffness and muscular tightness. Then, devote 5–10 minutes to gentle static stretches, which will help minimize the sensation of muscle fatigue in the days following the event. Please refer to the stretching program below for the main muscle groups of the lower limbs.
- Change your clothes as soon as possible to avoid hypothermia.
- Request ice for an ice massage or, ideally, immerse your lower limbs in cold water for 5 minutes. This will help reduce potential inflammation and alleviate pain.
- Seek assistance from physiotherapists, members of the Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists, after finishing the race if you experience any musculoskeletal issues. They will provide immediate care and appropriate guidance for your condition. If discomfort persists in the following days, consult your physiotherapist for a proper assessment and to determine the optimal treatment.
- Once you return home or to your hotel, take a shower. Immerse your legs in cold water (13–18°C) for 15 minutes. If you cannot tolerate very cold water, bathe at a comfortable temperature, avoiding hot water. Dry your legs by gently rubbing the muscles with a towel.
- To reduce swelling in your legs, elevate them by resting them against a wall for 10–15 minutes. This procedure can be repeated several times during the day. Caution: to avoid hypotension, do not rise suddenly to a standing position.

1st Week after the Race

- Alternate between hot and cold water during your shower.
- After bathing, perform very gentle stretching exercises. Allow your level of discomfort to guide you—there is no need to force the movement.
- In the days following the race (2 to 4 days after, but not immediately upon finishing), a session of gentle massage (avoiding deep or intense techniques) will help reduce muscle fatigue and relax overworked muscles.
- Toward the end of the week, a massage session with deeper pressure may further support the body's recovery process.

Prior to the New Beginning & Essential Information on Stretching

- Reward yourself, for example, with a new pair of shoes or a new foot orthotic.
- If a particular injury persists, consult your physiotherapist, a member of the Hellenic Physiotherapists Association (PSF), for the safest way to address it.
- Evaluate the outcome of the race you have completed and set achievable goals for the next one. Remember that in a marathon, the whole body is engaged, not just the legs. After the race, it is the appropriate time to ensure that many muscle groups—not only those of the lower limbs—are stretched and relaxed. Therefore, in addition to the usual muscles (gastrocnemius, quadriceps, hamstrings), include stretches for key muscle groups of the arms, trunk, pelvis, and feet.
- Immediately after the race, make sure that stretches are very gentle, painless, and performed without “forcing” the already fatigued muscles and tendons.
- Later, during the second week, slightly increase the intensity of the stretches, but still without causing pain. Remember that full restoration of muscle function takes time. Be patient for about a month, and soon your body will regain its original flexibility.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Static Stretch Exercises

➤ Gastrocnemius and Soleus Stretch

Place one foot in front of the other. The heel of the back foot should remain in contact with the ground. Shift your body weight forward until you feel a “stretch” in your calf. To stretch the gastrocnemius, keep the back knee straight throughout the stretch. Bend it to target the soleus.



➤ Quadriceps Stretch

Grab your foot and pull it toward your glutes until you feel a “stretch” in the front of your thigh. During the stretch, keep your torso upright and your knees close together.



➤ Hamstring Stretch

Lie on your back. Pull your leg toward your chest and straighten the knee until you feel a “stretch” in the back of your thigh.



➤ Iliopsoas Stretch

Place one foot in front of the other and shift your weight forward until you feel a “stretch” in the front of your hip.



➤ Piriformis Stretch

Lie down and place one leg over the opposite knee. Pull the knee toward your chest until you feel a “stretch” in the gluteal area.



➤ Adductor Stretch

Place your feet apart. Shift your weight onto one leg, bending the knee, until you feel a “stretch” on the inner side of the other leg. Keep your torso upright during the stretch.



Prevention of common injuries

The Thessaloniki–Kilkis–Halkidiki Regional Department of the Hellenic Physiotherapists Association (PSF) and the Scientific Department of Sports Physiotherapy (ETAF) provide information regarding the prevention of the most common injuries that may occur during your preparation for, and/or participation in, the 14th Thessaloniki International Night Half Marathon – Zenith.

The Thessaloniki International Night Half Marathon is a relatively demanding race, during which runners may encounter various situations and potential injuries.

Below, the most common lower limb injuries are presented, along with advice for their prevention.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Prevention of common injuries

➤ Ankle Sprain

A few words: This is an injury of the ankle ligaments, most commonly affecting the lateral side of the ankle (lateral ligament). Symptoms may include pain, swelling, and difficulty moving or bearing weight on the joint.

Prevention:

- Avoid prolonged training on uneven surfaces.
- Consult your physiotherapist to include proprioception and balance exercises in your program, especially if you have a history of previous ankle sprains.



➤ Achilles Tendinitis / Tendinopathy

A few words: It is a painful condition that can occur even without an inflammatory response. Although there is no consensus on the exact causes, common etiological and predisposing factors include dysfunction of the gastrocnemius-soleus complex (an imbalance between muscle strength and flexibility), excessive foot pronation, flat feet, increased age (>30 years), sex (men are more likely to be affected), obesity, a history of previous similar injuries, inappropriate footwear, and training errors such as a sudden increase in training volume or prolonged running on hard surfaces.

Prevention:

- Gradually increase your training volume (no more than 10% per week).
- Ensure you wear appropriate shoes and check them regularly for wear.
- Perform regular stretches after exercise (see the PSF participant guide – Gastrocnemius and Soleus Stretch).
- Include eccentric (plyometric) calf muscle exercises in your training program.
- Female runners should avoid prolonged use of high-heeled shoes in daily life.



➤ Hamstring Injury

A few words: Endurance runners are at risk of hamstring strains, particularly in situations where speed or pace is increased abruptly (e.g., overtaking another athlete or sprinting). The risk of such an injury may be increased by a previous hamstring injury (especially if not fully rehabilitated), insufficient flexibility of the hamstrings themselves (although research is conflicting) as well as their antagonists (hip flexors), poor motor control in the pelvis, an imbalanced strength ratio between the quadriceps and hamstrings on the same side or between the hamstrings of both legs, sudden changes in training load, inadequate warm-up, and fatigue.

Prevention:

- Take care of muscle flexibility (see the PSF participant guide – Hamstring Stretches).
- Include eccentric (plyometric) hamstring exercises in your training program, as well as stabilization and motor control exercises for the pelvis.
- Consult your physiotherapist regarding the importance of muscle balance between the quadriceps and hamstrings, as well as between the dominant and non-dominant lower limb.
- During your race preparation, consult your physiotherapist, a member of the Hellenic Physiotherapists Association, if you experience any discomfort as described above or any other persistent discomfort during your training, or pain that lasts for hours after training, in cases of acute pain, or pain that wakes you at night. Your physiotherapist will help you identify and address the potential problem in a timely manner.
- During the race, physiotherapists who are members of the Hellenic Physiotherapists Association (PSF) will be stationed along the course and at the finish line to assess and address any musculoskeletal issues that may arise.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Prevention of common injuries

➤ Plantar Fasciitis / Fasciopathy

A few words: The plantar fascia is a band of dense connective tissue located on the sole of the foot, which forms the foot arch when under tension. Pain in the fascia can be caused by excessive loads on the foot and fascia due to shoes that do not support the arch and heel, the presence of high arches (pes cavus) or flat feet (pes planus), as well as increased tension in the Achilles tendon. It typically manifests as pain, mainly on the medial side of the heel.

Prevention:

- Your shoes should provide proper support for the arch and heel. If you experience discomfort, avoid walking or running barefoot or wearing shoes without additional cushioning (flat-soled shoes).
- Always choose cushioned shoes for training and lighter, supportive shoes for the race.
- Ensure that both the calf muscles and the toes maintain normal flexibility (see the PSF participant guide – Gastrocnemius and Soleus Stretch), and include stretches for the plantar fascia in your program by first pulling the big toe, followed by the other four toes, backward.
- You can frequently “massage” the plantar fascia to prevent it from tightening by using a tennis ball. Place the ball under your foot and move it in various directions while seated, using the weight of your foot.



➤ Stress Fracture

A few words: In runners, such stress fractures most commonly occur in the tibia (shin), the second metatarsal, and the navicular bone of the foot. Anatomical factors, such as flat feet (pes planus), may contribute. A previous history of stress fracture and female sex appear to be the main risk factors. A sudden increase in training load and abrupt changes in training surface also seem to play a role in the occurrence of fractures. Female athletes with amenorrhea or an abnormal menstrual cycle appear to be more prone to such fractures, although research findings are conflicting.

Prevention:

- Avoid sudden changes in training volume and intensity.
- Wear appropriate shoes for each training surface.
- Ensure that you maintain proper muscle strength and flexibility.
- Allow sufficient recovery time between your training sessions.
- Female athletes with amenorrhea should consult their physician.



➤ Muscle Cramps

A few words: During the race, a single muscle or muscle group may experience intense, involuntary, and sustained contraction. Although there is no consensus on the exact cause, severe muscle fatigue and impaired neuromuscular control appear to be the leading contributing factors. Training in very hot and humid conditions also seems to contribute to cramp development, particularly in athletes who are prone to them.

Prevention:

- Make sure to replenish the energy you expend during prolonged exercise (e.g., by consuming carbohydrate sticks at intervals) to avoid rapid fatigue. Consult your dietitian for further guidance.
- Avoid prolonged exercise or training in very hot and humid conditions.
- Make sure to rest your muscles and perform massage in consultation with your physiotherapist.
- Refer to the PSF participant guide (stretches) and do not neglect stretching, especially for the muscles that are most prone to cramps, namely the gastrocnemius, soleus, and hamstrings.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Prevention of common injuries

➤ Iliotibial Band Friction (Compression) Syndrome

A few words: The syndrome is caused by repetitive knee flexion and extension and manifests as pain on the outer side of the knee. It occurs due to excessive training volume, worn-out or inappropriate footwear, or prolonged training on uneven terrain. Other contributing factors may include weakness of the gluteus medius, the main hip flexor muscles (particularly the iliopsoas), and/or the gluteus maximus.

Prevention:

- Do not increase training volume and/or intensity abruptly. An increase of up to 10% per week is acceptable to avoid excessive stress on your tissues.
- Avoid prolonged training on uneven or hard surfaces.
- Ensure good muscular control of the pelvis, hip, and knee by exercising the muscle groups symmetrically.
- Consult your physiotherapist regarding massage in the area, appropriate stretches, and the assessment of any biomechanical issues.



Seek specialized guidance and advice from your physiotherapist, a member of the Hellenic Physiotherapists Association (PSF), who will instruct you on the appropriate stretches for both your warm-up and recovery, at the following link: http://psf.org.gr/physio_members.php.

NUTRITIONAL ADVICE

BEFORE THE RACE

Goals: glycogen supercompensation – adequate hydration

- Choose one of the carbohydrate-loading protocols, aiming to increase muscle and liver glycogen stores above normal levels.
- Consume adequate fluids in the 24 hours prior to the race.
- Consume approximately 500 ml of fluids two hours before the start.
- Have a light breakfast and avoid reducing your dietary intake at the last minute, thinking it will make you lighter.
- No experimenting before the race! Nutritional practices should be tested during training to identify the foods that work best for you.

DURING THE RACE

Goals: prevent dehydration – maintain glucose levels

- You should already be accustomed to drinking plenty of fluids (150–250 ml every 15 minutes) during training.
- Weigh yourself before and after an intense training session to estimate the amount of fluids you can safely consume during the race, corresponding to your body weight loss. This approach helps prevent both dehydration and hyponatremia caused by excessive fluid intake.
- Use each aid station to meet your energy requirements.
- Consume sports drinks containing the ideal carbohydrate concentration of 4–8% and sodium (0.5 to 0.7 g per liter of water).

AFTER THE RACE

Relax, rest, and:

- Achieve optimal recovery by consuming, within the first 30 minutes after the race, a snack containing 2–4 parts carbohydrates to 1 part protein.
- Over the next 4 to 6 hours (every 2 hours), consume carbohydrate-rich foods (1.5 g per kg of body weight) to fully replenish glycogen stores.
- Drink fluids (~500 ml) for every 0.5 kg of body weight lost during the marathon.

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RUN the Night



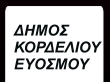


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