

FOR THE WIN

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Message from Dr. Fralich

Happy Spring everyone! It feels like we're right on the brink of spending more time outside, whether it's going for a walk, working in the yard, or beginning another season of outdoor sports. Those who have been in Spokane for any length of time know the 49th annual Bloomsday race is just around the corner, scheduled to take place on Sunday, May 4, 2025. If you have never participated in this fun, 12K (7.46 mi) community event, I highly recommend it; you can run, walk, participate in a wheelchair, push a stroller, volunteer, or just show up and people-watch/cheer on the participants! For kids in the 3rd through 7th grade, the 1-mile Junior Bloomsday race takes place on Sunday, April 13, 2025, and is also a ton of fun. You can find more information and register for these events at <https://bloomsdayrun.org/>.

In this month's *For the Win*, Shay will provide you with tips about how to train for Bloomsday and minimize your risk of injury, whether you are a beginner or seasoned runner. You will also be inspired by the story and accomplishments of another one of our many amazing patients, Gunhild Swanson. At NWSEM, we are honored and take pride in helping patients who choose us to partner with them on their different health journeys. While we know it is important to be healthy physically, we believe it is also equally important to prioritize mental health. For young student-athletes

(grades 9 - 12), we established an annual event called the **Sports Performance and Leadership Summit** scheduled to take place on **Saturday, May 3, 2025**, at Gonzaga Prep High School. Our mission is to educate and inspire young student-athletes, helping them identify their strengths and opportunities for growth, while providing them with the tools required to navigate the path of excellence in competition and life. This year's theme is "Own Your Power" and is open to student-athletes as well as coaches, who will learn from some of the region's most accomplished athletes, coaches, and healthcare leaders about topics such as the power of a positive mindset and team culture, the power of sleep, playing multiple sports, and hot topics as NIL and the college transfer portal. Student-athletes will even get hands-on practice learning how to make nutritious meals to power their bodies before, during and after competition! To view the SPAL Summit agenda and register, please click here: <https://www.spalsummit.com>. This event was wildly successful last year and we are excited to offer it again. Scholarships are available if needed, so spread the word and sign up today! We hope you can join us and we look forward to seeing you outside enjoying Spring in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.



Patient Spotlight - *Gunhild Swanson*

At the age of 80, I have been involved in running for 46 years. I began running in 1978 and my first race was Bloomsday that year. My first marathon was supposed to be Coeur d'Alene in 1980, however Mount St. Helens erupted just before the date of the race and it was cancelled. My first one then was the "Spokane Marathon" in September 1978 with a time of 3:22:53. I've run 216 marathons to date, with a personal record of 2:56:44 in the Seattle Marathon in 1982.

My ultra running began in 1985 with "Climb A Mountain", from the Riverfront Park clock tower to the summit of Mount Spokane in a time of 5:24:21. I have run 83 ultra marathons to date, from 50K (31 miles) to 171 miles in 77:02:19 hours at "A Race for the Ages" (I stopped short of my allotted time of 79 hours, equaling my age of 79.)

I have two ultra marathon races I'm particularly proud of because they were record-setting events for me:

"Western States 100 Mile Endurance Run" on 6/27/2015. This is a trail race that starts in Olympic Valley, CA at the site of the 1960 Winter Olympics and ends 100.2 miles later in Auburn, CA traversing trails up and over and through the Sierra Mountains, climbing more than 18,000 feet and descending nearly 23,000 feet. That fateful day in 2015 I was 70 years old (5 days short of my 71st birthday.) The race allows 30 hours to complete it. I crossed the finish line in 29:59:54, with just 6 seconds remaining on the clock, having sprinted down the Auburn HS track straight-away to make it. This made me the first, and so far only, female age 70 to finish this race.

"Across the Years 12/30/24 to 1/2/25 – 72 hours (3 days). This race is in Peoria, AZ and consists of 1.41-mile circuit through the Peoria Sports Complex. The concept is "go as you please" and complete as many miles as possible until the end of your event. There are simultaneous races of 6 hours, 12 hours, 24 hours, 48 hours, 72 hours and 144 hours (6 days) happening. During the event they serve food and drink round the clock, and I got to rest, tend to personal needs and sleep on a cot in a rented tent as needed, adjacent to the course. I had a plan to try to set some USATF age records along the way in the F-80-84 category and notified race/timing authorities ahead of my trip. And so it went:

- 50 miles 16:31:04 (old record 19:35:34)
- 100 kilometers 20:51:30 (old record 26:00:28)
- 100 miles 41:36:59 (old record 47:21:12)
- 24 hours 67.7 miles (old record 57.78 miles)
- 48 hours 115.7 miles (old World record 102.999 miles, old U.S. record 100.77 miles)
- 72 hours 145.19 miles (old World record 101.835 miles). The U.S. does not recognize 72 hours.

Due to pain in my right hip and foot, I sought treatment from Dr. Fralich to ensure I could participate in my target race in Peoria, AZ. I was close to having to withdraw, but with a steroid injection in my hip joint just 9 days before the event and relief from the foot pain through an anti-inflammatory compounded cream, I was able to move forward.

My foot has healed, but the hip pain has returned since the race. While I'm able to walk, jogging or running is still not possible, and sitting can be painful. I recently had an MRI of my hip and I am looking forward to receiving a targeted, appropriate treatment based on the diagnosis.

I would describe my overall experience with Dr. Fralich's clinic as *beautiful!* Dr. Fralich is highly skilled and dedicated to helping me heal as quickly as possible. The office staff is awesome, and I was able to get an appointment the day after I requested one! I would definitely recommend the clinic to other athletes and individuals—there's no long wait for an appointment, the orthopedic and sports medicine expertise is top-notch, and Dr. Fralich really listens and works to find solutions!

3 Tips to Prevent Common Running Injuries

By Shay Hannigan-Luther

As Spring arrives, many of us in this area look forward to participating in Bloomsday and getting back into running shape after the winter months. However, for many runners, the road to race day can be disrupted by common injuries such as medial tibial stress syndrome (shin splints), patellofemoral syndrome, and Achilles tendinopathy.

While high-quality research on running injury prevention remains limited, expert consensus and existing data provide several suggestions for injury prevention. By focusing on a few key areas in your training, you can increase your chances of making it to the starting line healthy and ready to race.

1. Strength Training

Research suggests that incorporating strength training into your running routine is one of the most effective ways to protect your body from chronic injuries. Strengthening key muscle groups—particularly the legs, glutes, and core—can provide protection against overuse injuries. Aim to integrate unilateral (single leg) exercises and exercises that focus on stability, agility, and balance.

Proper form is essential to avoid injury during these exercises. If you're unfamiliar with strength training or unsure about your technique, consider consulting with a fitness professional to ensure you're executing exercises safely and effectively.

2. Prioritize Recovery

While logging miles is vital to building endurance, equally important is how you recover. Giving your body time to rest and repair is crucial for long-term progress and injury prevention. High-quality sleep, proper nutrition, and adequate hydration are fundamental components of a good recovery strategy. Additionally, consider incorporating mobility exercises or active recovery routines to help alleviate muscle tension and soreness between runs.

3. Gradually Increase Mileage

To avoid overloading your muscles, tendons, and joints, it's essential to gradually ramp up your mileage. Most runners should aim to increase their weekly running distance by no more than 10% every week. This incremental approach gives your body time to adapt to the increased load.

Including “de-load” weeks (where you reduce your mileage) every 4-5 weeks can help prevent overuse injuries by allowing your body to recover before ramping up again. Additionally, supplementing your running with lower-impact cross-training activities, like cycling or swimming, can improve cardiovascular fitness while reducing the stress placed on your joints and muscles.

By prioritizing these key areas, you can reduce your risk of injury and increase your chances of crossing the finish line injury-free.

Good `n Healthy

By Claudia C.

With Spring arriving and busier schedules, here's a quick and easy recipe that's delicious!

Chicken Salad Lettuce Wraps

2 Chicken Breasts, baked and diced
1 - 2 Green Onions, diced

1 c. Red Grapes, chopped

1/4 c. Celery, chopped

2 T. Olive Oil

Salt & Pepper to taste.

Personal preference: Trader Joe's Everyday Seasoning and Pecan pieces to taste.

4 - 6 Boston or Iceberg Lettuce Leaves

Mix together all ingredients except lettuce leaves. Chill in the refrigerator for approximately 30 minutes, for flavors to blend together.

To Serve: Take one Boston or Iceberg lettuce leaf at a time, spoon a heaping tablespoon of chicken mixture into the center. Wrap the lettuce around the filling. *Enjoy!*

Upcoming Events

Sports Performance & Leadership Summit

When: Saturday, May 3, 2025, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm

Where: Gonzaga Preparatory School

Who: All Athletes Grades 9 - 12

<https://www.spalsummit.com/>

Podcasts

Spotify - What's Right With Healthcare

Amazon Music - What's Right With Healthcare

iHeart Radio - What's Right With Healthcare

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<https://www.instagram.com/laura.fralichmd>



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