



Inspire the World to Fitness®

Contact:

Kelly Nakai
IDEA Health & Fitness Association
858.535.8979, ext. 212
knakai@ideafit.com

Tabitha Bailey
HetzelMeade Communications
805.241.2532
tabitha@hetzelmeade.com

Should Exercisers Ditch Their Shoes? A Scientific Look at Barefoot Training

An exciting new training dimension for exercisers to consider this year.

San Diego – May 24, 2010 – IDEA Health & Fitness Association, the leading membership organization of health, wellness and fitness professionals worldwide with more than 23,000 members in over 80 countries, has covered the latest research recommendations about barefoot training and is eager to share the news with runners, athletes and exercise enthusiasts.

With the release of *Born to Run: A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen*, Christopher McDougall's book about the Tarahumara Indians of Copper Canyon in Mexico (Knopf 2009), interest in barefoot running has soared. The author himself became curious about barefoot running as a potential means of improving foot strength and running mechanics in order to become more competitive in ultramarathons (50-kilometer and 50-mile distances).

This new awareness of barefoot running has prompted many exercise professionals to integrate some barefoot training into program design. This *IDEA Fitness Journal* article, [Barefoot Running](#), reviews running popularity, injuries and injury prevention strategies, and presents a number of barefoot training program ideas.

Here are 5 of the 10 steps offered in the article that exercisers can use to introduce barefoot running techniques into their routines:

- **Step 1.** Do not start the program with barefoot running. Begin by doing various activities of daily life without shoes; for example, gardening, walking to the mailbox and walking barefoot around the house.
- **Step 2.** Introduce some movement activities on an even grass or indoor surface. Perhaps do some walking, jogging, calisthenics and games (e.g., volleyball or frisbee) at a park, in a grass field or on an indoor track.
- **Step 3.** Adopt a progressive overload approach, as you would with any exercise training program. Do multiple short sessions of barefoot training during a regular workout (e.g.,

10 minutes at the beginning with another 10 minutes at the end), or do two to three 10-minute bouts throughout the day.

- **Step 4.** For the first 2 weeks (or more), keep the total barefoot training time per session to no more than 30 minutes.
- **Step 5.** Gradually increase the time, and/or combine the shorter sessions into one longer session.

You can access the other five steps and the full article at <http://www.ideafit.com/fitness-library/barefoot-running>.

About IDEA Health & Fitness Association

IDEA Health & Fitness Association is the world's leading membership organization of fitness and wellness professionals with more than 23,000 members in over 80 countries. Since 1982, IDEA has provided personal trainers, group exercise instructors, fitness program directors, mind-body teachers, health club owners and fitness center managers with pertinent information, health and fitness educational opportunities, career development programs and industry leadership while helping them enhance the quality of life worldwide through safe, effective lifestyle and fitness programs. IDEA members interact with consumers more than 25 million times a year in the fitness marketplace. For more information on IDEA fitness and wellness conferences, publications, professional fitness education and products, member services and other activities, visit [IDEA Health & Fitness Association](http://www.ideafit.com).