

### **What would be the best time to run?**

In 1991, after many years in athletics I decided to make the jump and to run a marathon for first and only time in my life, along with my coach for that time, the Spanier Antonio Serrano, former best time of Spain in the marathon and coach of some Olympic finalists we chose the race where I would make my debut, the Marathon of Catalonia, in Barcelona, Spain.

In order to avoid the effects jet lag I went in advance to his home in Toledo. The first thing I observed how many hours of sleep my coach had, many. The first day in Toledo I felt very tired, it was due in part the effects of the 6 hours difference by time zones between Spain and Venezuela. Next day, and more rested, I got up at 6 in the morning for a jog a for the Toledo's narrow and cobbled streets I could see the residents of that city who were going to their places of work, little traffic, a pleasant smell of olive oil in the atmosphere that opened my appetite, and as a rare thing I did not see any person jogging.

At the end of my trot I return to the Antonio's apartment and my surprise was that it was almost 8 o'clock in the morning when my coach got up, He told me that I was crazy for having left to run so early, we took a breakfast and spoke for a while, I swear that by his accent Castilian I barely understood half of what he was saying, he went back to bed and by 11 o'clock he went for a little bit jogging since he was resentful of an injury.

An Olympic runner trains at 11 in the morning?

Training at different times of the day is very diverse. There are those who jump out of bed and before the dawn comes they are already trotting, others are trapped by the sheets and run about 8 o'clock, others at 11 and many during evening hours. The most daring do it at night, as it is said Lasse Viren did in his distant Finland in order to make up the difference hours and try to fit as much as possible to the hours that would compete when coming to America for games Olympic Games.

Each person is different and that is the first factor to solve the dilemma about which is the best time to run. Personally in my times as a runner I felt more benefit when I made my stronger workouts around 6 and 7 at night, and the soft jogs in the morning hours, preferably between 5 and 7. But, and what makes some people feel more comfortable running in the morning, others more comfortable if they do it in the afternoons? First of all, it is good to know that every living being is conditioned by a biological controller which determines the magnitude of the changes that may occur in the body depending to the time of day. For living beings that controller or sensor is the circadian rhythm, which represents the physical temperature, hormonal, stress, behavioral changes, etc. that are produced in a cycle of approximately 24 hours, being highly influenced by light and darkness.

This circadian rhythm is regulated in turn by biological clocks which are located in the hypothalamus

Returning to the point about what is the best time to train, there are many studies that argue that morning exercises offer more advantages to people than those who do they perform at night. However, there are a similar number of investigations that reach a different conclusion. As I said before, each person has individual characteristics and circadian changes will occur according to those characteristics.

Some people who do exercises to lose fat and have better body weight control, it is good to do physical exercise away from the hours of the meals. Being the morning hours the ideal to do it. In addition, running in the mornings avoids leaving days without training since most of the social, educational and labor commitments are made in hours of the afternoon.

However, especially in cold places, when carrying out the morning exercises the environmental temperature is very low so the risk of injury increases.

Training in the afternoon implies that body temperature and hormone levels reach a maximum level, which could be a benefit since our body is physically in the best moment to practice sport.

There are those who maintain that exercises at night help resistance and increase the muscle mass. As I said before, I felt much better when I did my hardest workouts in the afternoon hours. However, I could notice that in the opportunities that I culminated my workouts very late (8:45 to 9 at night) I had a lot of difficulty sleeping.

If we take by reference the schedules of the main competitions in the world in matter of racing, as well as some professional sports, they take place at night and more than to commercial commitments and broadcasting rights on television, undoubtedly performing them at night has advantages. Most of the 42 km races are carried out in the morning, I think that it is largely due to logistical issues than other nature.

To summarize, some of the advantages of running in the mornings could be.

After training, if it has been done without a very high exhaustion, the individual may face daily tasks with great joy, willingness and energy.

When training early, the rest of the day can be used for other activities.

For road racers, they serve as an adaptation due to the fact that many those races are set in the morning.

In some places the mornings are colder than the afternoons which are a great advantage.

Advantages of running in the evenings and nights.

There is a higher level of hydration since liquid could have been ingested properly during the daytime hours.

Greater nutrition, having made at least three meals throughout the day. That guarantees the glycogen reserve necessary for good performance.

The organism is from the physiological point of view at an optimal level.

After training shortly you can sleep, in the morning you will have to work or study.

In short, be it in the morning, afternoon or evening, the most important thing is to train.