



Gut Cancer Foundation Auckland Marathon meeting

Liam Willis – Executive Officer – GCF

Kiri Price – Running coach



What is our 'why'?

- Gut cancers are cancers of the digestive system including; oesophagus, stomach, liver, gallbladder, pancreas and bowel cancer
- Collectively, gut cancers are the most common cancer in New Zealand – around 22% of all cancer diagnoses but are rarely talked about.
- Over 6,100 New Zealanders diagnosed each year – 17 every day and the incidence is increasing.
- Sadly over 50% of those diagnosed with a gut cancer will die within 5 years.
- All cancers of the Upper GI system have 5-year survival under 30%

The impact of your support

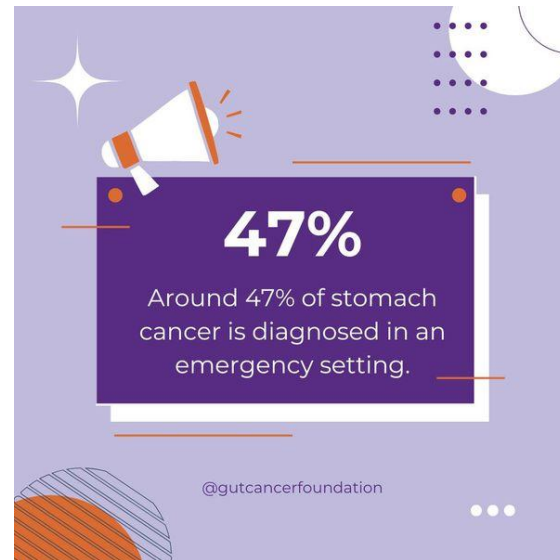


- The funds you raise will help researchers find better ways to detect, diagnose and treat gut cancers, improving the outcomes for the 17 Kiwis diagnosed every day.
- Clinical trials cost between \$1,000 and \$10,000 per patient but can give access to a new treatment up to 5 years earlier.
- Regular exercise has been proven to reduce your risk of developing gut cancers.
- Sharing your journey will help raise awareness.



The impact of your support

- Supporting patient information and support.
- Supporting nationwide awareness programmes
- Supporting vital advocacy and access to new treatments



Top fundraising tips

- Personalise your fundraising page to include your 'why'.
- Share your page on social media but also use email, personal message or even a text as it can get better results.
- Don't be selective, share with everyone you know!
- Thank and tag friends on social media as that will prompt others to donate.
- Share on LinkedIn to reach contacts you might not have considered
- Add an email signature with the link to your page
- Put up a poster in your workplace with a QR code to your page



Top fundraising tips

- Check if your workplace do 'fund matching' for employees or ask the boss to support you.
- Hold an online raffle with a donated prize.
- Make a pledge for anyone who donates or as an incentive for friends to help you reach your goal.
- Consider 'offline' fundraising as an alternative e.g. movie night, bake sale, garage sale, etc.
- Be proud of what you are doing! You are helping to make a difference for many kiwis impacted by gut cancers





**GUT CANCER
FOUNDATION**
RESEARCH & AWARENESS

OESOPHAGUS | STOMACH | LIVER | GALLBLADDER | PANCREAS | BOWEL

Tips to help you prepare for the Auckland Marathon events Sunday 2 November 2025



Kiri

Running Coach and Deep Water Running Coach based at AUT Millennium for past 15 years. Wife, mum of 3 and marathon runner.

I've completed over 230 marathons to date. This year will be my 20th Auckland Marathon. I'll be pacing the 5-hour marathon pack!

I'm a member of the New Zealand 100 Marathon Club. I was the 11th woman to join, and my marathon times range from 3.31 to 10 hours plus.

My proudest marathon achievements – completing 25 marathons in one year, and 8 marathons in 8 days. I have also paced, guided, or helped others in over 80 of my marathons.

I was a volunteer coach for 4 years for Achilles NZ (disabled athletes) and took teams to three New York City Marathons - 2013-2016

I have used my running to raise funds or awareness previously for The Cancer Society, Gut Cancer Foundation, Achilles New Zealand and Women's Refuge



Your running shoes are your first point of contact with the ground and it's vital to be in a pair that are not only comfortable, but also in a pair that are right for you - your build and your running mechanics. If you're experiencing niggles or injuries it always pays to check your shoes first. Visiting a specialist shoe store for a proper shoe fitting is a worthwhile investment.

Along with the correct pair of running shoes for you, it's important to invest in good running socks that will wick away moisture which will help to prevent blisters.

Your shoes should also have plenty of wear in them come race day. Most running shoes are good for 500-800 km. Make sure you run your event in the most comfortable pair you have, that do have life left in them.

It's a great idea to have done one or more of your longer runs in them so you know that they will still be comfortable at that latter stage of the event. Over longer distances our feet tend to swell a bit too so this can be an issue.

Footwear is key



Be strong

Adding strength work into your weekly schedule will help make you a better runner. You'll have better running mechanics – you'll be more efficient and have a better running economy. The better your running form, the better your performance. You'll be faster as you have more power ($\text{speed} \times \text{strength} = \text{power}$).

The stronger you are the stronger your muscles, tendons, ligaments and connective tissues will be, and the more injury resilient you'll be. The stronger you are, the longer you can hold good running form, especially as you fatigue towards the end of your event.

See your gym instructor or PT for a running specific program that will support your running training as you work towards your goal. Or google and workout from home. The options are endless. Just be consistent.

if you're not implementing strength work already into your training - it's not too late to start! Just give any big workouts a miss the week leading into the event!



Running in the rain, wind or cold is challenging, but if you're dressed for the conditions it's so much easier to get out there and get going!

When it's cooler using thermal or merino tops to keep the warmth in are great. As are gloves and beanies. Having a good rain jacket is key too. Wearing a cap to keep the rain out of your eyes works wonders.

In warmer weather having light and light coloured, breathable gear will make your running more comfortable. And don't forget the reflective gear for those dark early mornings or nights – be safe – be seen!

It can be quite cool on the start line of the Auckland Marathon, but by the time you reach Takapuna you've warmed up and are ready to lose a layer, so starting with a thermal top on Race Day can be a good idea. A tip here is to use a race belt rather than pinning your number to your top.

Have a few practice runs in your **Gut Cancer Foundation** shirt, and what you'll wear on race day to make sure everything is comfortable for race day. Plus, you'll also be raising awareness just by being seen in your shirt!



**Dress for the
conditions**

During your training it's very important to ensure you're allowing your body time to recover and to adapt to the training. Especially in these last few big weeks of training.

There are easy ways to tell if you're not sufficiently recovered – your morning heart rate is elevated more than 10%, you may have a sudden weight loss or gain, your sleep may be compromised, you may be grumpy or unenthusiastic, your fitness may decrease, you're more susceptible to colds, and you may lose your mo-jo.

Ensure you're optimising your training by allowing your body to rest and recover.

- ▶ Schedule in one to two rest days per week
- ▶ Schedule in easier training weeks as you build up to your event
- ▶ Factor in some cross training (e.g. Pool running, cycling or swimming)
- ▶ Ensure you're getting a good 7-9 hrs of sleep per night
- ▶ Nourish your body with a good well-balanced diet and keep it well hydrated

Recovery is key

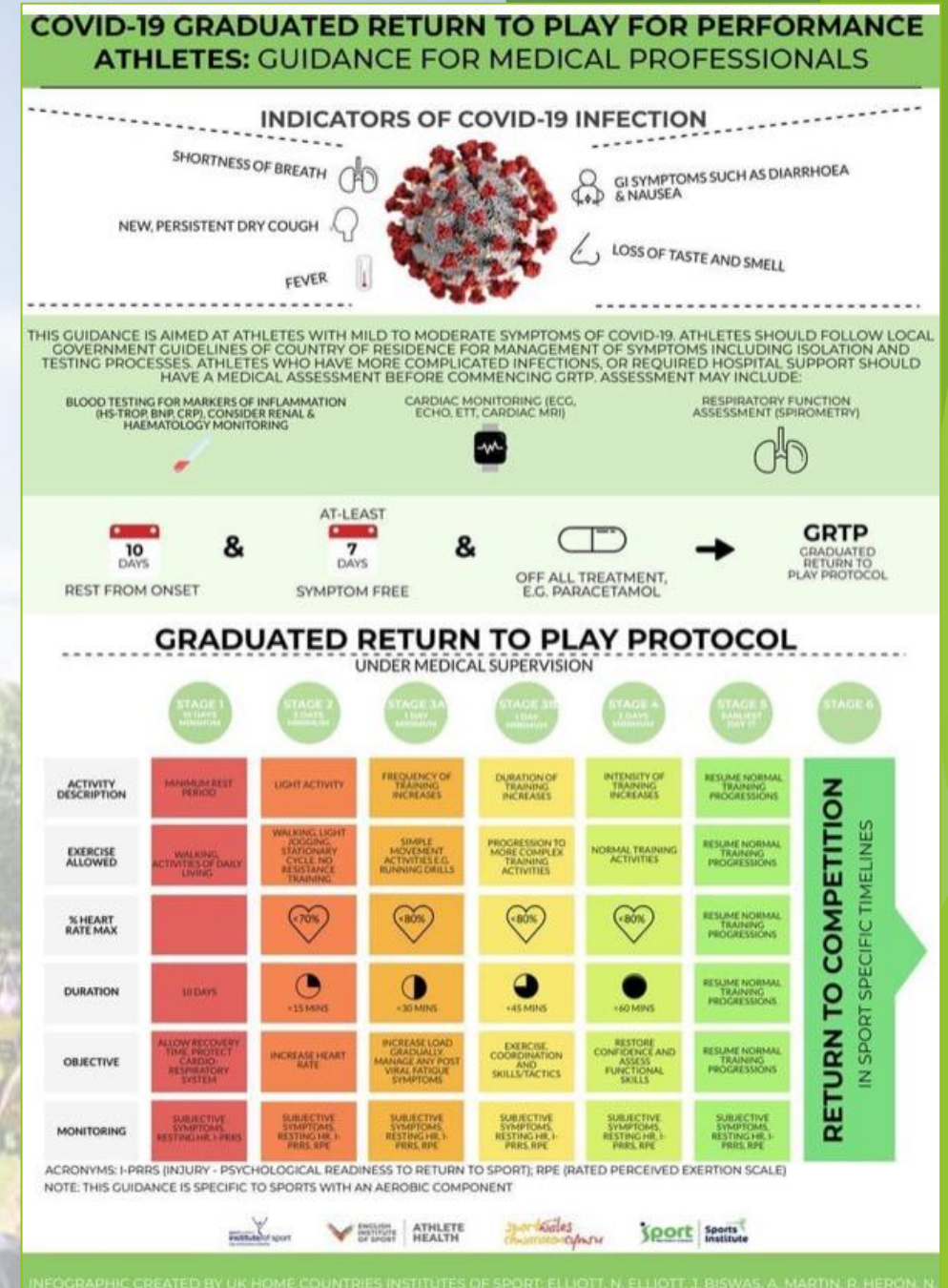


Covid & other bugs

Covid is still a thing, and there's lots of other bugs out there too. Everyone's experience is different, and everyone's recovery is completely different too.

One of the key things to note is not to return to your pre-illness exercise levels too soon. Remember Covid in particular affects all your body's organs – including your lungs and your heart. We hear too many stories of people suffering from long covid symptoms. It's so important to listen to your body and give it the time and space it needs to make a full recovery.

Here are some helpful guidelines. But do seek the advice of your doctor for guidance if you have had Covid recently or catch it before race day.



If you experience pain or discomfort, or know something's just not right – STOP running and seek advice ASAP.

Treatment will be dependent on the type of injury, but generally for soft tissue injuries applying ice for 10 minutes every 2 hours for the first 24 hours will help.

RICE – rest, ice, compress and elevate.

Injuries and niggles don't just go away. Seeking help from a physio should be your first port of call. They will also be able to address any imbalances or weaknesses and advise how best to proceed and how to get you back on the road sooner, and how to keep you there.

If you need to take time out from running you can use cross training (cycling, swimming, deep water running) to help maintain your fitness.

Don't panic – you WILL NOT lose all your fitness from taking a few days off!



**Address niggles or
injuries**

You'll need to be well fuelled and well hydrated to do your best on Race Day.

There will be PURE electrolyte drink on the 11 aid stations at the Auckland Marathon. Electrolyte drinks replace primarily sodium but other minerals too.

If you're going to use this on the day, it pays to practise with this in your training to ensure it works for you.

On training runs over 90 mins, and on race day, you will need to keep your carbohydrate stores topped up to give you enough energy to get to the end without hitting the wall.

The best way to do this is to start early in the event and keep up a regular regime.

The key is using your longer training sessions as opportunities to practise what you'll do on race day, work out how you'll carry what you need and to find your magic formula for success!

Ballpark figures – we need 600-900 mls of fluid, 30-90 gms carbohydrates, 500-700 mg of Sodium – per hour – in a half or full marathon.



Hydrate and fuel

Be mentally strong

Running a marathon or distance event is 80% head and 20% legs.

Positive thinking and visualisation are powerful tools to get yourself through some of these longer distance events.

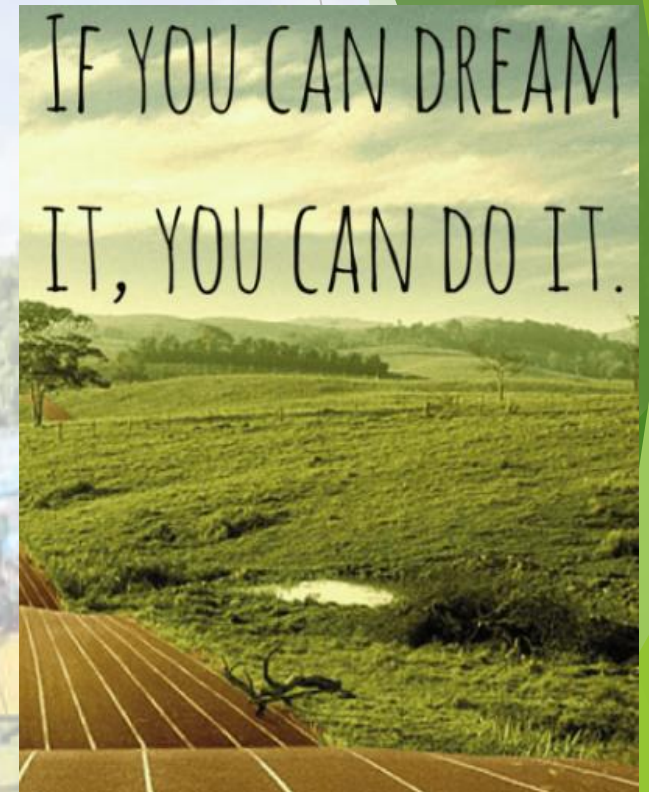
We all have good and bad days with running. That's how we learn – from making mistakes in our training!

Remember your **WHY** – why you signed up to support the **Gut Cancer Foundation**.

Make sure any specific goals that you set yourself for Race Day are achievable and within your capacity. Be realistic but also flexible with these goals.

Remember this is your journey, and your challenge. Don't compare yourself to others. There will always be people faster than you, and there will always be people slower than you!

Race Day Tip – for the last 10km of your event list 10 people (you can write them on your arm on the day) – and run a km for them – but the last km or little bit – that's for you!





Over the past few weeks and months, you've been putting in the hard yards – all those aerobic runs, those hill runs, all those strength training sessions, those recovery sessions and of course all those long runs.

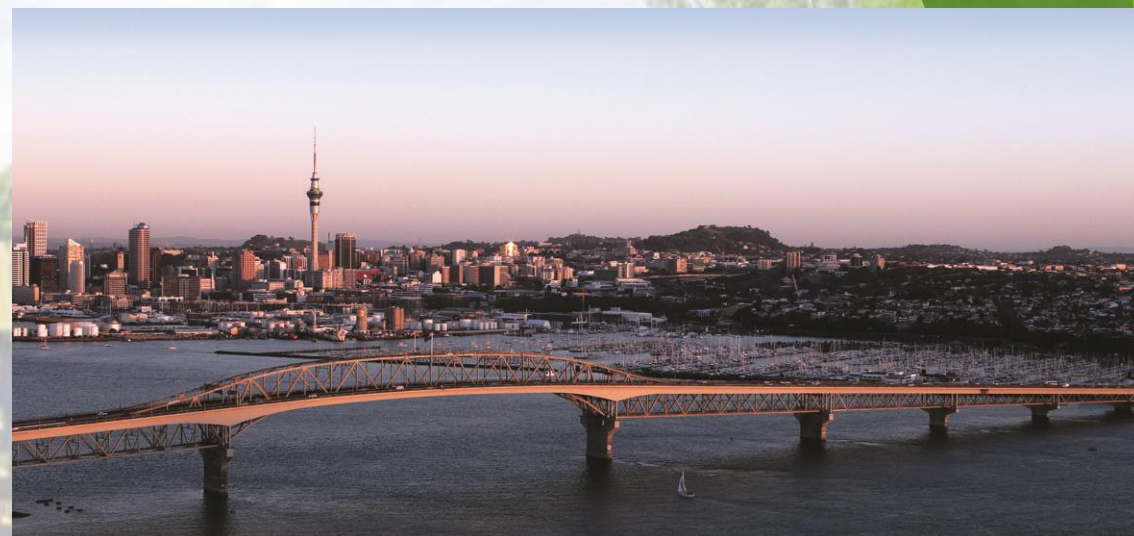
On race day all that hard work will pay off. The consistency of your training over all this time and the accumulation of all that training will pay off. You'll be strong enough, fit enough and mentally tough enough to get through this event!

When you get to that start line – remember all that work you have put in if you're having any doubts. Your taper period will have enabled you to absorb all that work, and you'll be refreshed and recovered enough from that last long run, so you'll be good to go.

Plus, the adrenaline of race day and all the excitement will kick in and help carry you through your distance. A few nerves are great – they show that doing this event means something to you!

So, trust your training, trust your body, and just have fun!

Trust in your training



Run on the Auckland Marathon course if you can from time to time.

Start some of your runs at the same start time as your event so that you can practise your pre-run breakfast and morning routine.

Practise your on-the-run fuelling and hydrating.

Become familiar with the location of the start line and where the finish line is located.

Wear the gear you'll be wearing on race day in some of your longer training sessions.

Practise your 'race pace' and tune into how this feels in the weeks leading into the event.

Know where the aid stations and port-a-loos will be located along the route.

Get used to the hills in the first part of the half and full. Run along Tamaki Drive so you get to know the Bays if you're doing the marathon.

Drive over the Harbour Bridge and visualise running over this and seeing the great views from the top.

Look at photos or videos online of the event, so you can visualise yourself running the course, and running through the finish line in and claiming that lovely medal!

Be event specific



Work out when you're going to pick up your Race Number and visit the Expo – don't leave that till the last minute. Once you've done that plan for an easy day or two prior to the event.

Prepare your gear (for the start, the race and the finish) early in the week. Ensure you are prepared for all weather scenarios – check the forecast.

Attach your Race Number to the front of your shirt or use a Race Belt.

Make sure you have packed warm dry clothes to wear to the start and put on when you finish and anything else you may need.

Read all the pre-event information so you know where to go, how to get there, plus any need-to-know info about the course including very important safety information.

Have a few early nights and bank a bit of sleep so it won't matter if you don't sleep well the night before.

Aim to get to the start line well rested, nourished and hydrated so focus on your intake during the week!

Make sure your race day goal is realistic, within grasp and also flexible.

Have a plan! Don't wing it!

Set your next goal (for after the Auckland Marathon event) so that your training continues (once you've recovered) and you keep motivated and inspired to keep going.



Race Week Tips

A good rule of thumb is aim to arrive at the Start Line a good one hour before the race starts so you can queue for the port a loos, drop your gear bag etc.

Take something warm and dry to wear while you're waiting to start. If it's raining, an emergency poncho or rubbish bag will also keep you dry while you wait.

Seed yourself in the starting chute accordingly. Use the pacers available to make sure you're not running too fast. Check your pace every km in the first few km to make sure you're not running too fast – especially as the first 5-8 km are loaded with hills and that's before you even get to the bridge!

Remember your fuelling and hydrating strategy that you practised in your build up, and make sure you start this early in your event. If you're flagging at any stage, take on some more fuel or fluid.

Lots of positive thoughts as you're going. Remember your WHY!
Develop a mantra for when the going gets tough – e.g. “relaxed and focused”. Break the event down into bite-size chunks as you go.

Head straight to the **Gut Cancer Foundation** tent after you cross the finish line so you can start your recovery process – rehydrate straight away (chocolate milk is great), eat within 30 mins (there will be food), put on dry warm gear and have a relaxing massage to help flush out your muscles!

- ✓ Golden Rule #1 - Don't do anything new on Race Day
- ✓ Golden Rule #2 - Start easy
- ✓ Golden Rule #3 - Run the kilometer you're in - enjoy!
- ✓ Golden Rule #4 - Listen to your body at all times



Race Day Tips