



# START LINES



## DALLAS RUNNERS LINE UP FOR HEART SCREENINGS

By Ashley Howland

How much would you pay for peace of mind? For members of the Dallas Running Club, it cost only \$30. In January, DRC members were offered a cardiovascular screening through a partnership with Baylor SportsCare and Baylor Hamilton Heart and Vascular Hospital at a special event designed just for them. The runners underwent cholesterol and blood glucose screenings in addition to electrocardiogram (EKG) testing designed to detect abnormal heart rhythms. The screening event was not intended to detect all cardiovascular problems, but it gave the runners a good baseline of their cardiovascular health.

"We all know running is a great form of exercise and can significantly decrease a

person's risk for heart attack or stroke, but like any high endurance sport it may trigger an underlying heart condition that can lead to serious complications and in some cases, even death," says Bill Borowski, coordinator of athletic training outreach for Baylor SportsCare. "Coupled with highly publicized cardiac-related medical emergencies at local and national races, some runners are concerned about their own health. That's why we created this event just for them."

Based on media coverage of national races, it seems more and more runners are experiencing medical emergencies, and Dallas has certainly had its share. At the 2008 White Rock Marathon, a runner collapsed

at mile 23. Autopsy results reported by the local media concluded she experienced a cardiac arrhythmia, a heart abnormality she was probably unaware of. At the Detroit Marathon in October 2009, there were three deaths; two at a half marathon in San Jose, California; and one at the Baltimore Marathon that same year.

Whether or not running directly contributed to these deaths is not clear, but because they are widely publicized, it causes concern in the running community. However, experts say this does not necessarily mean running is dangerous. A recent study from the American College of Cardiology reported that the risk of sudden death during a mara-

thon is 0.8 per 100,000 people. In comparison, the risk of dying from childbirth is 13 in 100,000 births, the risk of dying from diabetes is 23 in 100,000 and the risk of dying in a car accident is 1 in 6,700.

For Meredith Levin, a DRC member who participated in the screening, the Baylor event was a way for her to confront her fears. "As runners we owe it to ourselves and our families to do as much as we possibly can to check up on things and try to prevent any issues," says Levin.

To learn more about Baylor SportsCare and Baylor Heart and Vascular Hospital, call (800) 4BAYLOR or visit [www.BaylorHealth.com](http://www.BaylorHealth.com) and [www.BaylorHeartHospital.com](http://www.BaylorHeartHospital.com).

## A HALF MARATHON DREAM ACHIEVED

By Libby Jones



the first two aid stations, many panicked around me as the big sign labeled "Last Gatorade Table" revealed they were out of Gatorade, and the water tables were chaotic with few cups on the tables and dazed and overwhelmed volunteers. And this has

ment of three minutes and 28 seconds in one month!

I stumbled forward and scanned the finish line volunteers there for my runner friend, Kay, who was volunteering in that area. I saw her, we locked eyes, I froze, put