



Many health-conscious seniors start each day with a hike or run. When traveling, you may want to continue the daily discipline.

Running in a new city can be an exhilarating experience of new scenery, especially in the early morning when the streets are just waking up. Heavy traffic hasn't started yet, and there's still some cool, clear night air to help make your exercise routine pleasantly healthy.

However, along with the benefits there are potential safety concerns. Some tips can help make your outdoor exercise in the unfamiliar city safer. 1. Early morning: The best and safest time is just at dawn. Runners usually have the city all to themselves for about an hour before all the noise, exhaust fumes, cars, trucks and crowds of rushing people compete for space and time.

2. Night: If you decide to do your running after dark first descends on the city or later, you need to be concerned about your safety. If you run in the street, unless you wear reflective clothing, drivers may not be able to see you well and quickly enough.

Even inanimate items could be a danger. For example, if running from a lighted area into a dark one, your eyes may not adjust in time to see a pole or trashcan loom up in front of you. Always carry a flash or clip-on light. Whatever the time of day or night, when running in a busy city, obey all traffic signals and be alert for drivers who don't.

3. Crime: If you run in a big city, whether on the street or in a park, there's always the possibility of encountering potentially dangerous people. For example, groups of city teenagers decide to make fun of a senior runner.

Though they may not intend to hurt nor rob you, you don't need the harassment. Stay in well-lighted areas and avoid gatherings of young people. Always have a well-charged SmartPhone in case you need help or other emergency.

4. Dogs: If there are unleashed dogs where you're running, you may trigger their instinct to chase. Carry a small can of Mace or other repellent to ward off barking and/or attacking dogs. Incidentally, it could also come in handy against overly aggressive teens or other humans with the intent to chase you.

5. Buddy system: Remember in summer camp and you had to stay with another kid when swimming or hiking? These days, you may enjoy the solitude of being a lone runner, but it's much safer to be out on unfamiliar streets or park pathways with at least one other person by your side.

Running in the city can be a great way to stay healthy while traveling. Just follow all the common sense rules and you'll get home safely.