

SAFETY TIPS



This is a rigorous and demanding event. It is much more difficult than a “typical” run/walk marathon event of similar distance due to the terrain, elevation, and dry/dusty weather conditions. You must be in good health to participate. Every year many participants sustain avoidable life threatening injuries because they underestimate the physical demands of this event. The Bataan Medical Team recommends all participants consult their individual physician to educate themselves about medical issues and risks relating to this event. Only physician, who is familiar with your personal medical history, your current health, your medications, and your specific medical condition and risk factors, can advise you as to whether you are fit to participate safely and the precautions and preparations you should take.

Heat-related illnesses are a significant threat. Heat-related illnesses occur when the body is unable to properly cool itself. The body normally cools itself by sweating. However, under some conditions sweating is not enough. In these cases, a person’s body normally cools itself by sweating. However, under some conditions sweating is not enough. In these cases, a person’s body temperature rises rapidly. Very high body temperatures may damage the brain or other vital organs and result in death.

Individuals at increased risk for heat related illnesses are those with poor fitness (unable to run 2 miles in less than 16 minutes), overweight, and age greater than 40.

Before the race consider these additional individual factors that prevent safe and successful participation in the event:

- drinking alcoholic beverages within the last 24 hours before the race,
- lack of recent quality sleep,
- recent illness (even minor),
- and taking over the counter or prescription medications known as decongestants or antihistamines within 72 hours of the event.

During the race, seek medical assistance if you experience symptoms of impending heat illness:

- headache,
- muscle cramps,
- weakness,
- heat sensations on the upper body,
- lightheadedness,
- confusion,
- blurred vision,
- shortness of breath,
- nausea,
- or vomiting.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US:

army.bataanquestions@mail.mil
army.bataanrules@mail.mil

www.bataanmarch.com

SAFETY TIPS



Every participant has responsibilities:

1. Consult your physician.
2. Fill out the Emergency Information and Medical History on your bib.
3. Listen to the weather forecast. Know the risks and plan accordingly when running during hot conditions. Heat-related illnesses are life-threatening conditions. Adjust your march and hydration plan accordingly.
4. Develop and implement your individual plan for hydration. Be prepared to adjust your plan given the weather conditions and how you are feeling during the event.
5. If you experience or feel you are about to experience a medical problem, ask for help immediately. It is foolish and dangerous to proceed despite warning symptoms.
6. Help your fellow participants.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

Drink plenty of liquids — DRINK BOTH WATER AND SPORTS DRINKS. Do not drink only water. Both water and sports drinks are available at the water points. If you march and sweat for a long time and drink only water, you can dilute your body's electrolytes, which can lead to weakness, nausea and confusion. Remember, by the time you are thirsty, it's too late.

For more information on preventing heat injury, visit the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine website.

- **Listen to your body!** See a medic if you are not feeling well.
- **Listen to your feet!** Take care of hot spots before they turn into nasty blisters.
- **Use sunscreen.** At White Sands' elevation, sunburn can occur within 10-15 minutes.
- **Watch your step.** Beware of rough terrain.

Be respectful of wildlife along the route. You may see critters ranging from those native to the area, such as rabbits and snakes, to the exotic oryx — an African antelope which was imported to New Mexico.

White Sands Missile Range has been a site for defense testing, to include various munitions, for more than 50 years. Do not touch, pick up or kick anything along the route. Report anything suspicious to missile range officials.

If you see a marcher who needs aid, help them. Report injured or ill marchers to race officials.

There are 12 water points along the route — make sure you drink plenty of liquids. The greatest danger to marchers is dehydration because of the dry desert climate. DO NOT drink alcoholic beverages the night prior to the march.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US:

army.bataanquestions@mail.mil
army.bataanrules@mail.mil

www.bataanmarch.com

SAFETY TIPS



We encourage you to alternate between water and sports drinks that will be available at water points.

A condition called hyponatremia can be induced by over hydration with water exclusively. This lowers sodium levels in the bloodstream and can lead to seizure and convulsion activity. Marchers can avoid this condition by taking sports drinks containing essential electrolytes such as potassium, chloride, and magnesium.

Watch your step. Be aware of loose rocks, drop-offs, and rattlesnakes. The route crosses many arroyos, which are intermittent streambeds. In the event of heavy rains, do not attempt to cross the arroyos. Also be aware of “smaller” problems such as tarantulas, scorpions, and bees. If you are allergic to bee stings, carry your bee sting kit with you.

A small flashlight is suggested for early morning and also if you are on the route later in the evening to deter local wildlife that may be out.

Anyone who becomes injured should remain on the route until medical attention arrives from the nearest water point to avoid further injury. Anyone who witnesses an unsafe act or an injured marcher needs to immediately report the situation to the nearest water point or roving patrol.

Historically, about 25 percent of marchers become casualties during the Bataan Memorial Death March. Over half of these casualties are foot or ankle injuries. Conditioning your feet for the march should be an essential part of your training. Wear quality footwear and ensure that they are thoroughly broken in before the day of the march. Build your mileage gradually over a period of three to six months, depending on your current level of conditioning, to strengthen your feet and ankles and toughen the skin on your feet. You should build to walking at least 15 miles during your train up. People who train by walking four or five miles a day and then try to march 26.2 miles across the desert are the first to become casualties.

Keeping your feet clean and dry throughout the march will help avoid blisters. Change sweaty socks during the march and consider using a quality foot powder or even antiperspirant on your feet to help control sweating. Above all, don't try anything new (e.g., new shoes, new type of socks, new insoles or flexible orthotics) on the day of the march. If you have not trained with it, do not use it.

Good training, common sense, and proactive hydration will help ensure that your participation in the Bataan Memorial Death March is a safe and memorable experience.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US:
army.bataanquestions@mail.mil
army.bataanrules@mail.mil

www.bataanmarch.com