

**From:** "Find A Fox" <findafox@new.rr.com>  
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Now that times and distances for your workouts are getting longer, you might find yourself in a bit of...discomfort! Anywhere a body part rubs against something else, whether it be your clothing or yourself, soreness can result. Let's tackle some common issues one by one:

### **Blisters**

The bane of runners everywhere, blisters take the fun out of your run in a hurry. The problem is often your socks. Avoid cotton at all costs! The cotton stays wet when you sweat and contributes to the rubbing. For many, switching to a nice synthetic sock solves the problem. The right kind of wool (like Smartwool) is also a good choice. If that's not enough (and for me, it's not), a next step is a two-layer sock like the Wright Sock. Visit a running shop for plenty of sock options.

If you already have blisters, you know you have to protect them to get them to heal. Use band-aids to cover small ones, or try moleskin for bigger ones.

### **Inner Thighs**

You might find that your inner thighs rub together as you run. In cooler weather, if you're not sweating, or for shorter runs, this may not bother you. But as runs lengthen and you heat up, some chafing might result. John "The Penguin" Bingham dubbed this problem "chub rub"! (If you don't know the Penguin, you should! His mantra is an anthem for "adult onset" athletes everywhere: "The miracle isn't that I finished. The miracle is that I had the courage to start." Check out [www.johnbingham.com](http://www.johnbingham.com).) To prevent chub rub, I bite the bullet and run in spandex shorts. If you're not quite comfortable in spandex, you could try running shorts over the top. For some, just choosing a nice pair of synthetic shorts does the trick (see the discussion on cotton socks above!) Lubricants like Body Glide can help, too. (At some races I've been at, they have volunteers on the course holding a big piece of cardboard smeared with Vaseline so you can grab some "goo" on the go!)

### **Nipple Chafing**

Guys, you don't have to deal with the maze that is sports bras, but you get a special problem all your own instead: nipple chafing. As your t-shirt slides back and forth over your chest a few gazillion times as you run, soreness can result. First off, avoid cotton. A synthetic shirt will "float" away from your body and limit the chafing. As an alternative, a tight shirt that won't move can prevent the problem. Finally, it is quite common and totally acceptable to use band aids! (There's even a running shoe ad showing a bull in getting ready for the running of the bulls lacing up his Brooks running shoes and applying band aids!)

### **Saddle Sores**

After a long ride, you might find some of your "down there" parts irritated and sore. (I was sort of excited the first time I had this problem—I thought of it as a rite of passage that meant I had "arrived" as a cyclist!) As with all the problems I've discussed, prevention is the best bet. Make sure you're using good shorts with a quality chamois, and don't forget that bike shorts are designed to be worn without underwear (it's one less thing to rub). Make sure you're reasonably comfortable in your saddle. If you're not, some shops will let you "test ride" a saddle for a few days as long as you return it in saleable condition if it doesn't work for you. This allows you to make use of trial and error to find your ideal saddle. Finally, make use of one of the many chamois creams available. These are

typically thick, gloppy creams that you apply to yourself and your chamois to reduce friction. I am a fan of Chamois Butt'r, and I know of other Foxes who swear by Assos. Often times, you can get a trial size at the bike shop so again, you can find what works for you.

### **Learn the lingo**

Chamois—this is the pad in bike shorts. In the olden days they were made of leather, but now foam and/or gel are de rigueur.

Saddle—fancy word for “bike seat.” There are actually different shapes of saddle meant for road bikes and for triathlon bikes. The tri saddles have a longer nose for better comfort when you’re in aero position.

Body Glide—this is a common body lubricant. It’s a waxy substance that comes in a deodorant-style container. It’s commonly used by triathletes around the necks of their wetsuits to prevent chafing, but it can be used for all kinds of chafing issues.

### **Fox and Kit Chat**

Kits, you might want to ask your Fox:

- What kind of socks do you use? Do you ever have blister problems?
- Do you use chamois cream? What’s your favorite kind?
- What kinds of bike shorts have you used? Do you have a favorite style or brand or any avoid-at-all-costs experiences?