

No Sports!

The words in the title are usually **attributed** to Sir Winston Churchill. Whether Churchill actually said them or not, no sporting activity should be considered if one is not feeling well. If you are feeling tired and **lacking** in energy, it's most certainly your body telling you to slow down.

Amazingly, one **commonly held misconception** is that by forcing the body to the limit, it is possible to “kill” things like the common cold or flu. This is, of course, complete nonsense!

Male pharmacy customer: Hello. Could I have a packet of paracetamol, please?

PTA: Certainly, which size, 10 or 20?

I think 10 should do it. I have only a slightly raised temperature, and my joints aren't aching that much. You see, I need to be fit for the race tomorrow.

Oh! Really! What type of race is it? Are you driving?

Oh no, not at all. In fact, I'm taking part in a charity marathon. We're raising funds for sick children.

That is nice, but do you think it's a good idea to run a marathon, or take part in any race for that matter?

Why? I mean, lots of people are participating and it's for a good cause.

What I meant was, if you are not feeling well, do you think that you should participate. It can be dangerous you know.

In what way can a marathon be dangerous, aside from the number of people running?

It's not the marathon that's dangerous taking part is a danger to your health especially when you have a cold or possibly the flu.

In what way is it dangerous?

Have you ever heard of **myocarditis**?

Well the “carditis” part sounds as if it's something to do with the heart. Doesn't it?

Correct! The **myocardium** is the medical term for the muscular tissue of the heart and myocarditis is an **inflammation** of this muscle.

I think it's highly unlikely that I have myocarditis!

Not at present, but the chances increase if you **exert** yourself like during a marathon run instead of resting and not doing anything **strenuous** as long as you have these flu-like symptoms.

I wasn't aware of that!

Most cases of myocarditis are as a result of a viral infection. The problem with myocarditis is that its symptoms are no different from typical flu symptoms.

What are the symptoms?

Fatigue, shortness of breath and fever.

Wow! I have some of those symptoms already! I think I may cancel my participation in the run! You are right, it's just too dangerous!

Don't worry, this doesn't mean that you have myocarditis! But you might consider getting a full medical check-up, including a **blood count!**

I'll think about it! Thank you.

You're welcome! ■

*Catherine Croghan,
Lecturer in English and native speaker*

VOCABULARY

attributed	zugeschrieben
lacking	fehlend, mangelnd
commonly held misconception	weit verbreiteter Irrtum
common cold	Erkältung, grippaler Infekt
slightly raised	leicht erhöht
joints	Gelenke
charity marathon	Wohltätigkeitsmarathon
funds	Gelder, Mittel
myocarditis	Herzmuskelentzündung
myocardium	Herzmuskel
tissue	Gewebe
inflammation	Entzündung
highly unlikely	höchst unwahrscheinlich
exert	anstrengen
strenuous	anstrengend
fatigue	Abgeschlagenheit
shortness of breath	Kurzatmigkeit
blood count	Blutbild