

What happens to your body during an ultramarathon

By Bonnie Berkowitz, Washington Post

Sometime in the past couple of decades, the idea of running a marathon became less crazy.

Since Oprah Winfrey finished the Marine Corps Marathon in 1994, millions of average Joes and Janes have tackled the distance, and now “26.2” shows up routinely on bumper stickers and bucket lists.

But for some people, a 26.2-mile marathon just isn't long enough. These athletes are turning to ultrarunning, a sport that not long ago was considered the reclusive, funky-smelling cousin of traditional road racing.

No one is saying that a marathon is short or easy, but there are some huge differences – physiological, logistical and psychological – between running far and running really, really far.

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