

I'm also an...
Ironman

Holly Iftner

Manager, Wellness & Worklife

People tend to think I've always been a runner, and that is not the case! I started running in my late 20s [mid-1990s] and did not run my first marathon until 2001. My first triathlon was in 2003, and 2011 was the first year I had done a triathlon since 2005.

I never thought I'd be a runner, but I decided to give it a shot at the nudging of a former colleague. We held each other accountable and started running until we were out of breath, which for a while was little more than a football field in length. It was never competitive, and we weren't shooting for a fast time. Running just became a good excuse for us to catch up with each other.

I completed my first Ironman—a triathlon with a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and 26.2-mile run—the last year at the age of 43.

In a previous role, I led global operations and corporate wellness consulting for a company located in Cyberjaya, Malaysia. I lived in Malaysia or Singapore for about a month every quarter. Part of my job was consulting with multi-national companies to localize and culturally adapt wellness initiatives and strategies for employees located in the Asia Pacific region.

While living in Malaysia, I registered to run an 8K race. My application was rejected because I wasn't a citizen.

My job is to create fun, effective and diverse programs that inspire and impact not only employees, but also the families that they go home to each day.

My husband is a true partner who supports me in all the things I like to do, like training for triathlons.

As a mom, I sometimes feel guilty for spending time away from my family for the sake of a run or time in the pool. Training for a purpose and raising funds for a good cause helps me stay motivated, and it also offers a natural way to engage my daughter in philanthropy and serve as a healthy role model for her.

In my family, we've adopted an "all foods fit" mantra. Nothing is off limits—we just enjoy everything in moderation.

I want Children's employees to know whether you haven't gone for a walk in years or are trying to improve your 10K race time, Children's is here to meet you wherever you are along your Wellness journey.

I struggled to be active after I had my daughter, Brooke. Shortly after her arrival, we moved to a new city, I started a new job and did not feel I had enough time to exercise. It wasn't until someone asked me to



help train a team of people that had never participated in a race that I saw a bigger reason to make time. My daughter and I did our first 5K together when she was in a jog stroller and 6 months old. Our pre-race picture is one of her favorite pictures now.

The best advice I'd like to give is, "Set small goals to start, keep things simple and just start."