

Health Promotion in Motion

Stay Active Through the Winter



It can take a little extra effort to stay active when it's cold outside, but it's worth it. The benefits of physical activity are many:

- Strengthens your immune system. Even moderately active people catch 20-30% fewer colds than their sedentary counterparts.
- Reduces feelings of depression, anxiety and stress.
- Improves sleep
- Increases your chances of successful weight loss and helps maintain a healthy weight.



The Basics of Physical Activity

- The goal is to be active 30 minutes a day.
- Physical activity does not have to be strenuous to be beneficial.
- Opt for activities you enjoy. They will be much easier to add to your day.
- Stay active with friends and family. It's more fun, and they will motivate you when you need it.
- Write your activity plans into your calendar. Make physical activity just as important as your other activities. Figure out where you can find time to be active in the yard, at the gym, at yoga class, or walking around the block. Planning ahead is part of getting into the habit of moving your body every day.

Walking

A 30-minute walk during your lunch break will help you feel more energized and refreshed and is a great way to fit physical activity into your day. This is a good strategy if you are busy after work.

- Walk by yourself if you need alone time or with a co-worker to make it a social event.
- If you don't have 30-minute block of time, it's okay to "break it up." Find three different times in the day to walk 10 minutes.

Winter Outdoor Activities

- Snowshoe
- Shovel
- Ice skate
- Ice hockey
- Sledding
- Build a snow person or sculpture
- Walk
- Snowboard
- Play tag in the snow
- Cross country ski
- Downhill ski
- Chop wood
- Look for animal tracks in the snow





When the Weather Outside is “Frightful”

When it’s too cold or wet to be outdoors, try one of these ideas.

- Play with your kids. They will love it if you push all the furniture and breakables out of the way and run in circles with them! Play Hide and Seek, Simon Says, or dance the Hokey Pokey. The point is to move and have fun!
- Some hotels offer discounted pool memberships or small fees for single visits to their facility.



- Turn on some music and dance.
- Ice skate at an indoor rink.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walk at your local mall.
- Do the laundry.
- Vacuum.
- Clean house.
- While you watch TV, get active during the commercial breaks. Do stretches, push-ups, sit-ups, jumping jacks, jog in place, or any other favorite exercise.



Stay Warm and Safe



- Dress in layers that you can remove as soon as you start to sweat and then put back on as needed. Start with a thin layer of synthetic material such as polypropylene. It will draw sweat away from your body. Avoid cotton, which stays wet next to your skin.
- Try wearing a thin pair of gloves under a pair of heavier gloves or mittens lined with wool or fleece
- Don’t forget a hat or headband — 30 to 40 percent of your body heat is lost through your head.
- Wear a helmet for ice hockey, skiing, snowboarding, and snowmobiling.
- Drink water before, during and after your workout — even if you’re not thirsty. You can become just as dehydrated in cold weather as in the heat.



- Remember to use sunscreen. It’s just as easy to get sunburned in the winter as in the summer.
- If it’s dark out, wear reflective clothing and carry a flashlight.