



Safety Tips for Winter Fitness

Almost everyone can exercise outdoors in winter weather, unless you have asthma or heart disease. Here are some tips to stay safe in frigid temps!

Check the Weather Forecast and Wind Chill

Check the forecast before you head outside. Temperature, wind and moisture are key factors when you plan a cold-weather workout. Wind can penetrate clothing, which can take away the warm layer of air surrounding your body. Any exposed skin is vulnerable to frostbite.

Signs of Frostbite and Hypothermia

Caused by freezing, frostbite typically occurs on exposed skin -- your cheeks, nose and ears. It can also occur on hands and feet. Warning signs are numbness, loss of feeling or a stinging sensation. Get out of the cold immediately if you suspect frostbite and slowly, gently warm the affected area. If the numbness doesn't go away, seek emergency care.

Hypothermia is a condition where your body temperature is abnormally low. Your body begins to lose heat faster than it can warm it up. Older adults and young children are at the greatest risk. Symptoms include uncontrollable shivering, slurred speech, loss of coordination and fatigue. If you suspect hypothermia, seek emergency help right away!

Dress in Layers

Air trapped between layers acts as extra insulation. Wear clothes in layers:

Layer 1: A layer of synthetic fabric that deflects sweat. Not cotton, which stays wet close to the skin.

Layer 2: A wool or fleece jacket, keeping you toasty-warm.

Layer 3: A wind- and water-proof outer layer.

Protect your head, hands, feet and ears

- When it's cold, blood flow is concentrated in your body's core, leaving your head, hands and feet vulnerable to frostbite.
- Wear a thin pair of glove liners made of a wicking material (such as polypropylene) under a pair of heavier gloves or mittens lined with wool or fleece. Put on the mittens or gloves before your hands become cold and then remove the outer pair when your hands get sweaty.

- Consider buying exercise shoes a half size or one size larger than usual to allow for thick thermal socks or an extra pair of regular socks. And don't forget a hat to protect your head or headband to protect your ears. If it's very cold, consider wearing a scarf or ski mask to cover your face.
- Don't forget safety gear and sunscreen

For more information, contact Lorain County Public Health at 440-322- 6367.