

Wellness @Work

Holiday 2011

Winter Weather Workouts

Just because the weather is turning colder, it doesn't mean your workouts have to end.

You can take your workout inside or—with the following tips—stay outside and enjoy the Michigan winter.



Warm up—Cold, tight muscles are more prone to injury so you will need to take extra time with the warm up.

Dress in layers—Start with a synthetic material to draw sweat from your body. Avoid cotton, which stays wet next to the skin. Next, add a layer of fleece or wool for insulation. Top this with a waterproof, breathable outer layer. Wearing a heavy

down jacket or vest may cause you to overheat if you exercise too hard. If it's very cold, consider wearing a face mask or scarf to warm the air before it enters your lungs.

Choose appropriate gear—Wear clothing with reflective tape. Choose footwear with traction to avoid slips and falls. Remember to wear a helmet if snowboarding, skiing, or snowmobiling. Try chemical heat packs in your mittens or boots.

Pay attention to wind chills—Even if you dress warmly, extreme wind chills can make outdoor exercise unsafe. The wind can penetrate your clothing and cause frostbite to exposed skin. Choose an indoor activity if the wind chill is extreme or the temperature is below zero.

Don't forget the sunscreen and lip balm—Wear sunglasses or goggles to protect your eyes from the sun.

Remember...



Always let someone know your exercise route and expected return time in case something goes wrong.

Use these tips to safely exercise as the weather turns chilly and enjoy your winter

workout!

Source: The Mayo Clinic



Wellness at Work is a informational publication provided by MED-1 Occupational Health System to facilitate health and wellness initiatives for employees.

For more information on any topics presented or to access additional copies of current or past issues, contact Tammie Milligan at 616.459.1570 or go to — www.med1services.com.

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Ice and Snow—Take it Slow! Winter Safety Tips

Every year in the U.S., approximately 7,000 roadway deaths and 450,000 injuries are associated with poor weather-related driving conditions!

Transportation incidents continue as the number one cause of on-the-job deaths. The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) offers driving tips to help motorists safely navigate the roads—especially in severe weather conditions.

Knowledge. Before leaving home, find out about the driving conditions.

Clear off any snow from your vehicle to make sure you can see and be seen.

Inspect brakes, tire, hoses for a well-maintained vehicle. A breakdown is dangerous on a bad-weather day.

Time. Leave plenty of time to reach your destination safely.

Stranded. If you stall or are stranded, stay in your vehicle and wait for help.

An employer whose employees drive in areas with cold and inclement weather should consider equipping each vehicle with a storm kit including:

- ✓ Blankets
- ✓ Non-perishable food
- ✓ Extra warm cloths

Hypothermia is a potentially dangerous exposure during cold months.

Seatbelts. Always wear your seatbelt and properly restrain children in the back seat of a vehicle.

Don't be Distracted. Michigan law prohibits drivers from reading, writing, and sending text messages while operating a motor vehicle. Distracted driving is deadly even in good weather.

Don't Speed. The faster you're going, the longer it will take to stop. When



accelerating on snow or ice, take it slow to avoid slipping or sliding.

Distance. Give yourself space. It takes extra time and distance to bring your car to a stop on slick and snowy roads. Leave extra room between you and the vehicle in front of you.

Brake early, slowly, and never slam on the brakes. If you have anti-lock brakes, press the pedal down firmly and hold it. If you don't have anti-lock brakes, gently pump the pedal. Either way, give yourself plenty of room to stop.

Black Ice. Roads may seem dry but actually slippery and dangerous. Take it slow when approaching hot spots for black ice such as intersections, off-ramps, bridges, or shady areas.

Four-Wheel Drive. When driving on snow and ice, go slowly, no matter what type of vehicle you drive even an SUV with four-wheel drive. You may not be able to stop any faster, or maintain control any better, once you lose traction.

Skid. If in a skid, turn the steering into the skid, easing off the accelerator but not breaking suddenly.

Avoiding Roadway Crashes

Some of the leading causes of fatal roadway crashes are:

- ✓ Failure to keep in the proper lane or running off the road;
- ✓ Driving too fast for conditions or in excess of the posted speed limit;
- ✓ Driving under the influence;
- ✓ Failure to yield the right of way;
- ✓ Distracted driving;
- ✓ Operating in an erratic/reckless manner; and,
- ✓ Failure to obey traffic signs and signals.

Stay Safe Around Snowplows

Snowplow drivers are out on the roads to keep them clear of snow and ice and keep you safe. Here's what you need to know about driving around snowplows:

- ✓ Give snowplows room to work. The plows are wide and can cross the centerline or shoulder. Don't tailgate and try not to pass. If you must pass, take extreme caution and beware of the snow cloud.
- ✓ Snowplows travel below the posted speed limit. Be patient. Allow plenty of time to slow down.
- ✓ A snowplow operator's field of vision is restricted. You may see them, but they don't always see you. Keep your distance and watch for sudden stops or turns.