

Enduring the Elements

Nothing Can Stop You Now

Being active year-round

Although getting into your walking shoes and venturing outside when it's 50 below zero or hotter than Hades may not be the best idea, you don't have to let the weather put a damper on your physical activity. Keep in mind these safety precautions – they're key to stepping out in less than ideal weather conditions.

Tundra Treks

Check the forecast – always check the air temperature and wind chill factors before stepping outside. The danger zone for exercising outdoors occurs when the wind chill (cold temp + wind speed) is -20° F or lower.

Dress in layers – wearing multiple layers can protect you from the elements, especially wind and cold. Wear breathable clothing made from synthetic microfiber fabrics (like nylon) – the kind that allows sweat to pass through – because it helps maintain the right body temperature. Avoid heavy cotton materials and tight-fitting clothing because they hold water, which promotes body heat loss.

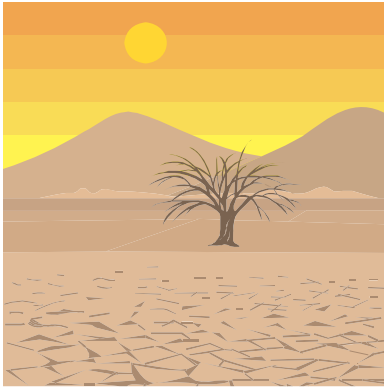
Drink water – dehydration can occur just as easily during cold weather as it can when it's warm. You may not realize it, but you lose body water while breathing in cold, dry air. Make sure you drink plenty of water

both before and after physical activity.

Focus on head, hands and feet – a study by the American Council on Exercise showed that in freezing temperatures 50% of heat loss is from the head, and that wearing a hat allowed participants to stay outside as long as they wanted to while exercising. It's key to wear a HAT to keep your BODY warm. Remember, wear insulated gloves, socks and a face covering (like a scarf) to prevent frostbite.



Keep these tips in mind for the hot & humid summer months...



Desert Walking

Be shady – when it’s warm and humid, avoid direct sunlight and blacktop surfaces. Try to find natural surfaces, like grass, and shaded areas for physical activity.

Water, water, water – about 15 minutes before you begin physical activity, drink 10-16 ounces of water. It may be a good idea to carry a water bottle with you or map out drink stops so you can hydrate while you’re active. Even if you don’t feel thirsty, it’s a good idea to sip on water throughout the day.

Make your own shade – wear a hat with a visor to shade your face and add sunscreen to your neck and ears to prevent sunburn. Sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection will protect your eyes and light-colored clothing will keep you cool.

Early bird or night owl – the hottest times of day are between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Avoid extreme heat by walking early or late in the day – just make sure you have enough light to exercise safely.

Five Questions

1. Who is your role model when it comes to physical fitness? Why?
2. What part of the day do you feel the biggest desire to get up and exercise? Are you able to exercise when you have this urge?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being low and 10 being high), how would you rate your commitment to being physically active?
4. Do you have to make a conscious effort to exercise, or is it just a normal part of your day?
5. Have you raised your expectations of what level of physical fitness you want to achieve?

This Week’s Challenge

If the conditions are too extreme to handle, be resourceful. Grab a jump rope, rent an exercise video or attend a class indoors to get your physical activity. A change of pace can add variety and keep your workouts interesting.