



Lady of America Newsletter - December 2009 - 'Tis the Season

Fitness: Exercise to Lose Weight Over the Holiday

In most parts of the country, the weather outside is frightful. It's cold and the snow is teasing us or bringing an early welcome. Winter is here and that means that most of us will stay indoors, abandoning our exercise programs until New Year's Day, when we jump back on the wagon determined to do it *this year*. Instead of skipping it, challenge yourself to exercise and lose weight over the holiday with an outdoor exercise program. Try winter workouts such as ice skating, jogging, cross-country skiing and skiing. Not only will you increase your energy, you'll bolster your immune system and burn calories. According to the Mayo Clinic, studies show that moderate exercisers get 20 to 30% fewer colds than non-exercisers do.



Outdoor Exercise Tips for For Winter:

- ❖ Check with your doctor before starting a winter workout. Experts say that almost everyone can exercise safely in the cold, including people with asthma and heart problems.
- ❖ Bundle up! Layering clothes underneath a windproof and waterproof outer shell helps maintain body heat. Dress in layers that you can remove as you sweat and then put back on as needed. If it's very cold, or you have asthma, wear a face mask or a scarf over your mouth during your winter workouts.
- ❖ Protect hands and feet. According to the Mayo Clinic, when it's cold, blood is shunted to your body's core, leaving your hands and feet vulnerable to frostbite. Mayo Clinic suggests wearing a thin pair of gloves under a pair of heavier gloves or mittens lined with wool or fleece. You might want to buy exercise shoes a half-size larger than usual to allow for thick thermal socks or an extra pair of regular socks. And don't forget a hat or headband — 30 to 40% of your body heat is said to be lost through your head.
- ❖ Drink plenty of fluids. Your body needs fluids during cold weather winter workouts.
- ❖ Warm-up first. Cold temperatures can make your muscles tight, thus opportunity for injury. Warm-up for a few minutes and then slowly ease into the exercise.
- ❖ Try to exercise during daylight hours. If it's dark, wear reflective clothing.
- ❖ Don't forget sunscreen, lip balm and sunglasses. Believe it or not, you can get sunburned in the winter.

- ❖ Recognize the signs of frostbite and hypothermia. Frostbite usually occurs on the face, fingers and toes. Warning signs include numbness, a loss of sensitivity to touch, tingling or a burning feel. Common signs to look for with hypothermia include shivering, slurred speech, lack of coordination and fatigue.

Not into the cold weather winter workouts? Try these indoor exercise tips for winter to keep you exercising to lose weight over the holiday:

- ❖ Join a walking group or walk at a mall.
- ❖ Join a women's fitness club or community center.
- ❖ Create a home gym with dumbbells, an exercise ball, mat and a jump rope. If you have a stationary bike, it's time to remove the clothes hanging on it. Try out a mini gym-in-a-bag kit.
- ❖ If you have stairs where you live, climb up/down for an efficient indoor winter workout.
- ❖ Get wet. Find a local indoor pool at a hotel or go online and use a health and fitness club locator. Try swimming, water aerobics, walking or running laps in the water.
- ❖ Get some DVDs. There is a wide selection of exercise and fitness videos available for everyone, including pregnant women, women over 50 exercises, high-energy cardio dance, walking, belly dancing, Tae Bo, sculpting and more.

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