

Top 10 Winter Tips for Staying Active

By Barbara Adams Physiotherapist © 404 4200

Check with your doctor before starting any new activity

1. Stay **SAFE** when outdoors

- Take a Back pack with:
Water, granola bars, cell phone, gloves, hat, extra windbreaker and long johns
- Always tell someone where you are going, and when you will be back, call if late

2. Wear **good shoes with snow tracks**.

- Take a cane if the ground is covered with snow or you are on hills



3. Use **walking poles** if you want to help your balance or build upper body strength too

4. Measure how much you walk in summer with a pedometer – make it a goal to keep up that step count

- Children should walk 12000 to 16000 steps per day
- Adults should walk 7000 to 13000 steps per day
- **Seniors should walk 6000 to 8500 steps per day**
- Disabled should walk 3500 to 5500 steps per day



5. Keep your heart pumping, even if you can't get outside

- **Stand up and sit down 5 to 20 times in a row**
- **Normal for a senior is to be able to do about 20 in 1 minute**
- Use a stationary bike or treadmill if it's too cold or walk in the mall
- Quit smoking and use any asthma medication if you are short of breath



6. **Get warm** before you exercise with a light walk or warm shower

- **Using a sauna** after exercise reduces muscle pain
- Temperature should be around 130 to 150 F
- Start with 5 minutes and build up to 15 or 20



7. **Swimming** works every muscle in the body

- Use the hot tub as your reward



8. Reduce winter fatigue with **weight lifting**

- Wear 2 to 5 lbs weights around your wrists or ankles
- Hold the counter if you have balance issues
- Start with 5 reps every second day and build up
- If you have pain, do movements without weights first



9. **Stretch regularly**

- Hip muscles on the front get tight from sitting too much
 - i. Stretching your hamstrings is good to do daily 5 to 20 sec hold x 3 reps
- Shoulders get tight from slouching
 - i. Stretching your pectoral muscles is good for posture



10. **Dance, bowl** or any activity that requires turning and bending

- Practice standing on 1 foot (normal is 10 secs) – hold counter if needed)
- 10% of your balance comes from your inner ear (Vestibular System)
- 70% of your balance comes from your eyes (Visual System)
- 20% of your balance comes from your feet + muscles (Somatosensory System)
- The Nintendo Wii Fit has bowling, golfing, balance and stretching games

