



You Don't Have to Stay Inside: Tips to Enjoy Your Winter Run

As the seasons begin to change and cold air comes rushing in, staying fit takes on new challenges. Many people will look indoors to their gyms or homes to begin their exercise program, but maybe you still long for that outdoor air during your run. With a little preplanning, nothing will keep you from it. Running in the winter can be quite different from summer runs. Whether you're a veteran runner or just starting out, take some of these tips with you as you begin your run. The first question you will face is where to run. Try and pick an area that is familiar, well lit, and has clean paths to decrease the risk of slipping. Instead of doing a long distance run, consider opting for shorter distance loops to ensure safety as your body becomes accustomed to the winter's freeze.

Whether running a marathon or a mile, cold air will quickly fill your lungs. "Frozen lung," as it is known, is felt when you first begin to breathe in that icy air. Please note that the lungs cannot actually freeze from breathing in cold air while on your run, but it can feel as if that is the case. This discomfort is normal when the air

you breathe in is colder than the air your lungs are used to experiencing. Be sure to differentiate chest pain from this cold, frozen feeling when breathing in icy air. If you experience chest pain, please stop your run and seek medical attention. Retraining how you breathe can decrease "frozen lung." The optimal way of breathing is to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Breathing in through your nose will help increase the temperature of the air as your body humidifies and warms it. If you have been running for years and have not yet established this technique, be cautious when starting out. You may want to decrease your mileage as your body adjusts to the different levels of oxygen. Another way to warm your breath is to wear a face mask or scarf, which can help warm the air before it enters your body.

You should wear clothing suitable for about 10 to 20 degrees warmer than what the temperature is outside. When running, body temperature will increase. If you overdress, dehydration and overheating become serious risks. To avoid this, keep hydrated and dress in layers that can be removed as you warm up. Also, wicking fabric can keep the body dry and warm while on the run. Apply lip balm and lotion to exposed skin to protect from windburn and try to avoid running directly into a chilly wind stream. A hat and thick socks to keep feet dry and retain warmth

are essential. Watch for frostbite of the fingers, nose, and toes, as well as any other exposed area. Exposed skin can freeze after being in 0 degrees for only 10 minutes. Since the Northwest typically does not get that cold in the majority of areas, you are less likely to get frostbite on your run. The best advice is to keep everything covered and dry. Be wary of placing your cold hands and toes into warm water after your run, as the drastic change in temperature will feel very hot and put you at risk for a burn.

A warm-up should always be performed before any run. This warm-up will help your body adjust to the cold temperature, prepare for the exercise, and increase core temperature. After a warm up, one can perform some dynamic stretching to get to all of the areas of the lower extremity prepared for the cold.

Knee pain can often be problematic for people running in the winter, as it can be harder during the winter to adequately warm up the knee. Dynamic stretching can be a good alternative in the cold to keep the body warm and working. Some of these activities listed below can also be performed in the comfort of your home if space allows.

Dynamic stretching can include:

Leg Swings Forward: Standing upright, swing one leg forward and backward 10 times. Repeat on other side.

Legs Swings Side:

Standing upright, swing leg to side and across body 10 times. Repeat on other leg.

High Knees Skip: Lift knees up high towards chest with a jump. Switch legs. Increase speed as tolerated. These exercises can be performed in a stationary location or can be done with a forward walk for laps. Perform for 1-2 minutes as tolerated.

Lateral Squat Walks: Standing up, lunge right leg toward the right side bending knee to 90 degrees. Bend left leg to 90 degrees, straighten right leg and bring left leg together to stand. These exercises can be performed in a series going the same way in laps or stationary going back and forth on each leg.

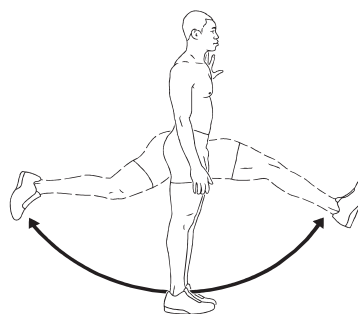
Be sure to stretch out your muscles, including the hip flexors, hamstrings, quadriceps, iliotibial band, adductors, and calf musculature after you finish your work out.

If you have any questions, have pain preventing you from enjoying your running, or are interested in more personal and specific programs, please contact your local Therapeutic Associates Physical Therapist at www.therapeuticassociates.com/locations. Best of luck while performing your winter walks, jogs, and runs! Be Safe.

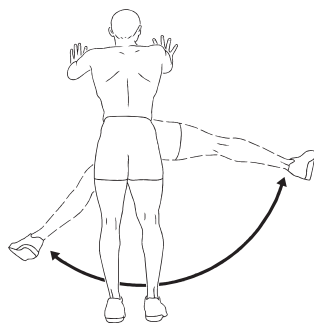


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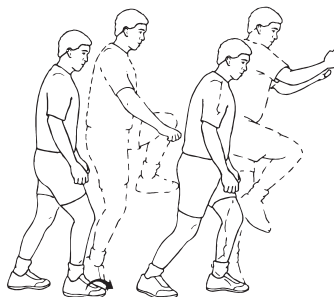
when the air



Leg Swings Forward



Legs Swings Side



High Knees Skip



Lateral Squat Walks

