

Exercise in cold weather — with precautions

Question: Is it dangerous to continue exercising outdoors during the cold winter months? Can you suggest any extra precautions to prevent excessive exposure to cold?

M.S., West Bloomfield

Outdoor exercise during a cold winter usually presents fewer problems than you would expect. Adequate clothing promotes heat conservation while exercise actually serves as an "antidote" to cold, increasing body heat production.

Physiologically, the body acts to conserve its own heat by reducing blood flow to the skin (vasoconstriction). Thus, heat is conserved within its vital inner regions. If this first line of defense is inadequate, the body shivers, which adds to the metabolic heat production.

A few extra precautions will help prevent excessive exposure to cold to help you be comfortably and safely warm in winter weather:

- Be extra careful when the wind is blowing. Temperature alone is not a valid index of cold stress. The wind serves to remove the layer of air your body has heated around you to keep you warm. The "wind chill factor" measures the effective decrease in temperature resulting from moving air. For example, at 10 degrees Fahrenheit in a 20-mile-an-hour wind the cooling effect is equivalent to calm air at minus 24 degrees.

- Beware of wet clothing. Since water is an excellent conductor, damp clothing presents a problem because it extracts heat from your body up to 240 times as fast as dry clothing! For this reason,

fitness

Barry Franklin



you should change wet clothing, particularly socks and mittens, when they become excessively wet.

- Dress appropriately. Overdressing for exercise in the cold may result in overheating and excessive sweating. A handy rule for dressing for exercise in the cold is to wear several layers of light clothing that can be shed or replaced separately as body heat changes. Between each layer, there is trapped air which, when heated by the body, acts as an excellent insulator.

The insulating properties of wool are widely recognized. It is one material which, when wet, still keeps the body warm. Most other materials, when wet, actually draw heat from the body and pass it into the air.

- Stay moving. Because of the potential 10-20 fold increase in heat production during strenuous exercise, body temperature can be easily maintained even in subzero conditions, as long as one continues to exercise. Avoid standing still for too long when it's cold. If you must stand around in the cold, move your arms and legs, walk, jog in place, anything reasonable to get the large muscles working.

- Protect certain body areas. Body heat is most

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
30	27	16	11	3	0	-2	-4	-4	-6	-7
25	21	9	1	-4	-7	-11	-13	-15	-17	-17
20	16	2	-6	-9	-15	-18	-20	-22	-24	-24
15	12	-2	-11	-17	-22	-26	-27	-29	-31	-31
10	7	-9	-18	-24	-29	-33	-35	-36	-38	-38
5	1	-15	-25	-32	-37	-41	-43	-45	-46	-47
0	-6	-22	-33	-40	-45	-49	-52	-54	-54	-56
-5	-11	-27	-40	-46	-52	-56	-60	-62	-63	-63
-10	-15	-31	-45	-52	-58	-63	-67	-69	-70	-70
-15	-20	-38	-51	-60	-67	-70	-72	-76	-78	-79
-20	-26	-45	-60	-68	-75	-78	-83	-87	-87	-88

This wind chart can be used to determine equivalent temperatures. The column at left shows Fahrenheit degrees, the line across the top shows wind in miles per hour. For example, at 20 degrees Fahrenheit in a 20-mile-an-hour wind the feeling is equivalent to nine degrees below zero on a windless day.

are easily lost from parts that have a large surface area to mass ratio — for example, the hands and feet. Keep them warm and dry. Mittens, or gloves under mittens, are preferable to gloves alone. For the feet, two pairs of wool socks are ideal.

A tremendous loss of body heat can occur from an uncovered head. This is due to the skin's poor

vasoconstriction response of the blood vessels of the head.

Dr. Franklin is co-director of cardiac rehabilitation at Sinai Hospital and on the faculty of Wayne State University. Questions may be sent to him in care of this newspaper.

Social action in tradition of Moses, Amos, Paul...

Some time ago, an article appeared with the title "Should the Churches Play it Safe?"

Reports from around the world indicate that religious persons are taking their convictions into the streets. They are not playing it safe.

Portraits of Pope John Paul II are used by the striking workers in Gdansk, Poland. Priests and laity from the churches of Rio De Janeiro confront police and government officials with their demands regarding slum housing. They carry posters with pictures of the Pope. In this country, the "Moral Majority" backs Reagan for President.

Many are not comfortable with religious groups who express such social action. Yet we must realize that social involvement comes out of the earliest of Christian and Jewish traditions.

FROM ANCIENT times, the prophets confronted



moral perspectives

Rev. David Strong

those within their communities who neglected justice and mercy.

Moses acted with great personal risk to prevent the mistreatment of a slave. Jesus made it very clear that God's judgment would fall upon those who lived in comfort and ignored the poor, the captives and the oppressed.

Many religious people have limited themselves to the relatively comfortable social service types of assistance. We hear no objections to collecting used clothing, food baskets or calling upon the sick. Such actions do not require that we confront anyone.

We are uncomfortable when issues are raised that require confrontation and conflict. This is particularly true when it involves confronting the state. A friend of mine saw a policeman beating up a teen-ager. He hesitated to confront the city with the issue.

A successful minister promotes the idea that clergy should not preach on social issues. "This is not what people come to church to hear" he says.

I BELIEVE there are a significant number of religious people, however, who will support social stands. Recently, a survey of why people join

churches indicated that a number of people will join a church precisely because it is relevant to the problems of society.

This is not a time of great social involvement. Yet religious persons and institutions were affected by the Holocaust and by Vietnam. We are not the same. We also must face the fact that to be true to our heritage we must be socially relevant.

Taking a socially controversial stand is still a risky business within American religious groups. Yet I believe there is more support for such stands than one would guess from appearances.

I will predict that not only in Poland or South America, but in this country, the potential for religiously motivated social action is great. When this happens, we will again hear the names of the founders: Moses, Isaiah, Amos, Jeremiah, Jesus and Paul.

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