

5 Ways to Stay Active During Winter

By Shawnti Rockwell, ND, Bastyr University



There is nothing like looking at a gray, chilly winter day to decrease your motivation to exercise. This can lead to an exercise lull during the winter, which can make it hard to resume exercise in the spring. To avoid that cycle, here are some things you can do:

1. **Set goals** for yourself about how often you will exercise. Create a system to hold yourself accountable to your goals.
2. **Join a gym!** Even if you normally wouldn't set foot in a gym, it is a good option during the winter to exercise inside where it is warm and dry. It is also a good place to do strength training, which is just as important for health as aerobic exercise like running and bicycling.
3. Use **high-intensity intervals**. There is more and more research about how short, hard bursts of exercise can be as beneficial as longer periods of more gentle exercise. A good routine is the New York Times 7-minute workout. The key to these is working out for a brief amount of time but working out strenuously. These are quick and can generally be done in your own home.
4. **Move as much as you can** – get up from your desk, take the stairs, go for a walk in your neighborhood or find other ways you can work movement into your daily routine.
5. Put on warm clothes and **go outside anyways**. If you have a routine you enjoy, don't let a little weather get in your way!

As always, if you have any health concerns or risk factors for cardiovascular disease, see your doctor before you begin a new exercise routine. While winter narrows our options, there are still many ways to stay active and fit!