

# Poe in the Know

November 2007

Volume 7

PoeCenter  
The Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education

## Exercise and cold weather: Stay motivated, fit and safe

You don't have to abandon your exercise routine in cold weather. Get creative! Explore indoor and outdoor options. Keep cold-weather safety tips in mind, too.

Cold weather might make you feel like hibernating, but you don't have to give up your exercise and fitness goals. You can exercise indoors. And by dressing properly and heeding cold-weather safety tips, you can exercise outdoors, too.

### Maintain your motivation

Focus on how you'll benefit if you keep up your exercise routine throughout the cold-weather season. Exercise can help shake those winter blues. It improves your mood, increases your energy level and helps you sleep better. And you'll be in better shape when the weather warms up.

Try to set aside 30 minutes or more on most days of the week for physical activity. It doesn't have to be all in one stretch. You can work it in a little here or there. And it doesn't have to be strenuous. Make a workout of household cleaning. Take the stairs. Go sledding. For extra motivation, work out with your spouse or a friend.

### Exercise indoors — Choose activities that won't leave you in the cold

Don't let cold weather sidetrack your exercise routine. Get creative!

- Walk at the mall. The hardest part about mall or indoor-track walking is getting there. Once you get started, you may be amazed at how quickly you finish your workout.
- Join a health club. Choose one that's convenient and geared toward your fitness level. Ask the staff to show you how to use the equipment.
- Make a splash at an indoor pool. Working out in water is easy on your joints. Try lap swimming or a water aerobics class.
- Invest in home exercise equipment. Choose something that's practical, enjoyable and easy to use. To stretch your exercise dollars, consider buying used equipment.



### Exercise outdoors — Dress right and play it safe

Want to take it outside? Stay safe as you brave the elements.



- Get your doctor's OK. For some people, cold air can trigger chest pain or asthma attacks. If you have any medical conditions or concerns about exercising outdoors, check with your doctor first.
- Dress in layers. Start with a thin layer of synthetic material such as polypropylene, which draws sweat away from your body. Next try fleece for insulation. Top this with a waterproof, breathable outer layer. To warm the air you breathe, wear a face mask or a scarf over your mouth. Remember to wear a hat and gloves, too.
- Choose appropriate gear. If you'll be outdoors when natural light is poor, wear reflective clothing. To stay steady on your feet, choose footwear with enough traction to prevent falls. Wear a helmet for downhill sports, especially if you're a beginner.
- Remember sunscreen. Snow reflects the sun's rays, so sunburn is possible even if you're cold. You might want to wear lip balm, too.
- Head into the wind. You'll be less likely to get chilled on the way back if you end your workout — when you may be sweaty — with the wind at your back.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Drink water or sports drinks before, during and after your workout — even if you're not thirsty. Cold air has a drying effect, which can increase the risk of dehydration. In turn, dehydration increases the risk of frostbite.
- Pay attention to wind chill. The wind can penetrate your clothes and remove the insulating layer of warm air that surrounds your body. Fast motion — such as skiing, running, cycling or skating — also creates wind chill because it increases air movement past your body. When the temperature is 10 F and the air is calm, skiing at 20 miles an hour creates a wind chill of minus 9. If the temperature dips well below zero or the wind chill is below minus 20, choose an indoor activity instead.
- Know when to call it quits. If you notice a patch of hard, pale, cold skin, you may have frostbite. Get out of the cold and slowly warm the affected area. If numbness continues, seek emergency care. If you suspect hypothermia — characterized by intense shivering, slurred speech, loss of coordination and fatigue — seek emergency care.



When it's cold outdoors, there's no need to give up and hit the couch. With a little planning and creativity, you can step up to the challenges of winter exercise.

Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research  
Written by Mayo Clinic Staff, December 20, 2006  
[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

## Ask the PO Educator!

By Steven White, MA

**Question:** With the cost of produce increasing every week, is it better to buy fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables?

**Answer:** The big debate between fresh and frozen vegetables and fruits has been a hot topic for a number of years. According to experts, the amount of fruits and vegetables a person needs is determined by their specific age, gender and caloric intake. For more information on this, you can go to: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>



There are several factors to consider, however. As you expressed your concern over the price of fresh produce increasing in your area and across the country, there are pros and cons to each side.

Fresh fruit and vegetables that are usually found in local grocery stores lose their vitamins and minerals over time as they are exposed to increased light and air. These items are usually shipped

from local farms and at around one to two weeks, they are still sitting in produce rooms losing important nutrients. Another con to fresh produce is that it may be improperly stored in transit and in the store, resulting in lost vitamins.

Frozen fruits and vegetables are another issue. When fruits and vegetables are frozen, they are usually flash frozen, meaning the fruits and vegetables are frozen beyond the melting point (cryogenically) to lock in all its important nutrients. In addition, buying frozen fruits and vegetables is not only easy, it's convenient and usually cost-efficient.

If you decide to buy fresh produce, look for what's in season and locally grown, as these selections will be freshest and relatively high in nutrients. Buy your not in-season produce frozen to keep a good variety of fruits and vegetables in your diet while not compromising nutritional value. Please note that frozen vegetables which have been thawed and refrozen will not be as nutritious as those kept frozen.

All in all, it does not matter how you get your fruits and vegetables; whether it's frozen, fresh or canned, as long as you get your "5 a Day", you are okay.

Source:

<http://www.delmonte.com/News/health7/body.htm>

<http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=76037>

Other reliable sources:

<http://busycooks.about.com/library/archive/blfrozenproduce.htm>

<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/columnnnn/nn970122.html>



## Healthy Grub Club

### Oh So Awesome Oatmeal

Prep time: about 10 minutes

#### Ingredients:

1 c. water  
1/2 c. rolled oats  
dash of salt  
1/4 c. applesauce  
pinch of cinnamon  
2 tsp. brown sugar



#### Utensils:

- cooking pot
- measuring cups and spoons
- stove (You'll need help from your adult assistant.)
- mixing spoon
- serving bowl

#### Directions:

1. Pour the water, oats, and salt into a medium-size pot on the stovetop.
2. Heat the mixture until it boils, then turn the heat to low.
3. Using a wooden spoon, stir in the applesauce and cinnamon.
4. Cook on low heat and continue to stir the mixture for 5 minutes.
5. Pour the oatmeal into a bowl and sprinkle the brown sugar on top.
6. Allow the oatmeal to cool for a minute before digging in.

Serves: 1

Serving size: 1 bowl

<i>Nutritional analysis</i>	13 g protein	9 g fiber	64 mg calcium
(per serving):	6 g fat	0 mg cholesterol	4.3 mg iron
390 calories	74 g carbohydrate	302 mg sodium	

Note: Nutritional analysis may vary depending on ingredient brands used.

Source: [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) Updated and reviewed by: Steven Dowshen, MD Date reviewed: May 2005  
Originally reviewed by: Allison Brinkley, RD, LD/N, CNSD

## Staff Spotlight:

### Steven White, Senior Health Educator

Steven White joined the Poe Center's Health Education Staff in August 2007 as a Senior Health Educator. Steven oversees all Nutrition and Physical Activity, Dental Health and General Health curricula and programming. He is most excited to learn and teach the curriculum in the coming year.

Steven was born and raised in Elizabeth City, NC and has most recently lived in Greenville, NC while attending East Carolina University, where he completed a BS in Worksite Health Promotion with a concentration in Pre-Medical Sciences and an MA in Public Health Education with a concentration in Epidemiology and Research. Previously, Steven served as Bioterrorism Coordinator and Teen Tobacco Prevention Coordinator for MTW District Health Department in Williamson, NC and then served as Health Promotions Coordinator and HIV/AIDS Educator for the Lee County Government.

Steven currently lives in Cary, NC where he is planning a wedding with his fiancé, Mika. He is very family oriented and spends as much time as possible with his two brothers, Ricky, 13, and Aaron, 4 along with the rest of his family and friends. He also likes to spend time cooking, reading, writing and shopping. Steven can be reached at the Poe Center at 919-231-4006 ext. 312 or at [s.white@poehealth.org](mailto:s.white@poehealth.org).