

your best **body**



Cold Sweat

No need to let dipping temperatures force you indoors. Discover how chilly-weather workouts can amp energy, burn more calories, and improve your mood.

BY CORRINE GARCIA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MUNETAKA TOKUYAMA



Don't waste your breath—the right gloves will keep you warm.

➔ No matter what time of year it is, breathing fresh air is a boon to your body. Outdoor exercise can crank up your energy while decreasing tension, frustration, and depression, according to recent research published in *Environmental Science & Technology*. Those effects may well be intensified in the winter, says adventure-fitness consultant Sean Burch, who set a world record running a marathon at the North Pole. "The heat and humidity in the summer can drag you down and tire you faster, but cold weather is invigorating," he says. "It stimulates your senses, tunes

you in to your surroundings—it makes you feel alive." There's a biological reason for that: "All exercise can increase your levels of those feel-good hormones, endorphins," says Kevin Plancher, M.D., head of Plancher Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine in New York City. "But because your body has to work harder in the cold, your endorphin production is boosted even more, leading to a happier state of mind." Plus,

exposure to natural light is a known depression fighter, especially for seasonal affective disorder, a condition brought on by the shorter, darker days.

Another bonus: You can burn more calories in the winter. Research published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* found that race times are faster in cold weather than in warmer temperatures—and quicker runs torch more calories, period. That alone is worth crawling out from under your comforter. Whether you're walking or jogging in your neighborhood, snowshoeing in the woods, or taking a trip to the slopes, it's time to start enjoying your winter workouts. Your complete guide:

Map Your Route

Stable, safe footing should be your priority when planning a winter route, says Andrew Kastor, a running coach in Mammoth Lakes, California (where he lives with his wife, U.S. Olympian Deena Kastor). For early-morning or evening workouts, scout out plowed streets and sidewalks that are well lit, to help you spot black ice. Look for a loop in your neighborhood that you can repeat as many times as you want, recommends Tracey Martinson of Running Club North in Fairbanks, Alaska. That way, if you become tired, slip on ice, or get wet, you will still be close to home and can quickly escape the elements.

Warm Up Wisely

Before any workout, walk around or jog in place indoors for five minutes, recommends Olympian Jeff Galloway, coauthor of *A Woman's Guide to Running*. When you head out, give your body time to adjust to the conditions by taking 30-second breaks every few minutes for the first 10 minutes.

Take Cover

Try to avoid open roads and paths near water: Tree-lined trails and city blocks with tall buildings can help protect you

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from biting winds and snow flurries, says Olympian Lindsey Anderson, assistant track and cross-country coach at Weber State University in Utah.

Cool—Don't Freeze—Down

To avoid getting too chilled during your cooldown, keep it brief: Slow your pace for three to four minutes, then go inside to stretch. Take off extra layers and keep moving for another five to 10 minutes before showering.

Start Small

If you normally do four miles in the summer, start with two. "It's better to underestimate your ability in the cold," says Martinson. If you have to stop, your body temp will drop rapidly, increasing your risk for hypothermia. Easing into it can also help your airways acclimate, says Burch. In subfreezing weather, it's helpful to wrap a scarf or neck gaiter around your nose and mouth to warm the air before you breathe it in, says Martinson.

Drink Up

You don't see your sweat losses in the winter like you do in the summer, so most people give little thought to staying hydrated, says Burch. But you can still sweat just as much (especially if you're bundled up). Try putting your bottle under your layers to help keep it from freezing (try Amphipod RunLite AirStretch Hydration Belt, \$45, rei.com).

Be Flexible

You may be an a.m. exerciser, but on extremely cold days, your best (and safest) bet is holding off until midafternoon, if possible, when temps are at their highest and paths are more likely to be plowed. And yes, there is such a thing as too-lousy weather. "Stay in if you have to battle wind, snow, ice, and darkness, because there are just too many challenges stacked up against you," says Kastor. ■

Gear Up

Just because it's nippy out doesn't mean you need to look like the Michelin Man!

