

# Work Out in the Cold

HEALTH TIPS FROM THE POSSE  
BY MARK RACKAY

We all know by now that the best cardio exercise is a good old-fashioned run. This would include jogging and power walking. Personally, I run at least three days a week, whenever my aging joints allow me to. My run is much slower now, but I keep it up for 45 to 50 minutes.

I like to run in the hours before the sun begins to hemorrhage in the eastern sky on our valley. This is a peaceful time, and I am only bothered by the occasional neighborhood wolf who likes to come after me and attempt to bite off various parts of my anatomy. My neighbor insists that I must be doing something to aggravate “Fluffy” because she is such a passive and sweet animal. At least Fluffy forces me to keep up my pace.

Winter throws a monkey wrench in my morning runs. I admit that tropical blood flows through my veins. Running in cold temperatures, with ice and snow on the ground, adds new adventure to a run around the neighborhood in the dark. Even Fluffy does not come outside when it is cold.

Running outside during the winter months brings about a whole new set of concerns and dangers. From slipping on the ice to chilling yourself, here are a few ideas to keep safe during your workout routine in the cold months.

You can always retreat indoors and hit a treadmill. I would rather face a scourge of locusts than be trapped indoors on the machine, so I usually brave the elements. There are some days that the weather is too adverse, and I am forced to stay inside, but given a choice, I head outdoors. Treadmills make me feel like the hamster on the wheel, running down the road to perdition.

Winter has fewer daylight hours, slippery roads and perhaps snow falling. For safety, try to be out during the daylight hours. Wearing a reflective safety vest or carrying a small flashlight will make you more visible to oncoming traffic.

Generally, dress in layers before heading out. I try to suit up as if it is



20 degrees warmer than the actual temperature. When running, this makes it just about right. When the temperature drops to the teens, my lungs ache too much to run outside, so back to the hamster and wheel thing.

Your base layers should be wool or a synthetic material. Polyester or polypropylene work well. You want a material that will wick moisture away from your skin to prevent you from getting chilled. Wool is one of the materials that maintains its insulation properties, even when wet. Some of the new synthetic wools provide all the insulation properties without the itching that can come with wool.

The next layer should insulate but allow moisture to escape. I find that fleece works well here. If it is cold enough for a third layer, I look for a lightweight and waterproof jacket that I can unzip to allow air in, but usually it is too cold or windy for a run if you need that third layer.

Your shoes should have an aggressive tread for gripping snow and icy surfaces. Try to avoid shoes that have mesh on the sides that would allow water in. It is best to opt for a

waterproof shoe made of Gore-Tex or a similar product. Salomon and Hoka both make excellent trail running shoes and I have used both with success.

If the roads or trail were too slippery, it would be best to hit the treadmill. The last thing you need is a broken ankle, or worse, from a fall. You can buy a set of Yak Trax for your shoes, which act like snow chains, but they can be difficult to run in. Fortunately for us here in Montrose, there are not too many days that it is that icy out, and when it is, it is safer to wait a day or two. Besides, they don’t make studded trail shoes.

Consider wearing a mask when outside. Cold and dry winter air can cause bronchial spasms, which inhibit the air from filling the lungs properly. Wearing a light mask can warm the air before it hits your lungs.

Just because its cold out, doesn’t mean you don’t have to hydrate. You lose as much fluid in winter as you do in summer. Drink water before, during and after your exercise outside. I hate carrying a water bottle around, so I drink 12 ounces before I leave, then hit it again when I get home.

Consider wind strength and direction while you are out. Try to have the wind in your face for the first half of your run, and at your back for the return trip. If you run with the wind at your back for the first half of your run, you will get hot and sweaty. When you turn back, and head into the wind, you will get chilled very quickly.

Whether you power walk, jog or run, continuing your exercise routine in the winter months is important. Braving the elements will help you build the necessary foundation for total physical conditioning. It also gets you outdoors in the fresh air, and to me it is better than a treadmill.

The positive side to running in the winter is that the neighbor’s wolf, Fluffy, stays inside by the fire. Now if someone would come up with studded trail runners, we would have it made.

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## First baby of 2024 born in Montrose

Montrose’s first-born baby of 2024 has arrived. Jessica and Russell Akers are excited to welcome Brayden Joseph Akers, who was born on Jan. 2 at 8:11 a.m. at Montrose Regional Health. Brayden was born 6 lbs., 5 ounces and 19 inches long and joins his two sisters, Natalie age 9 and Brooklyn age 4. The Akers, who live in Delta, received a gift basket from the Family Center at Montrose Regional Health, which was presented by their nurse, Nikki Soto Parra. The family is excited to have their first boy, who was born on the same day as Russell’s Grandpa. (Courtesy photo/Montrose Regional Health)



## Delta Health’s first born baby of 2024 arrived on Tuesday, Jan 9 at 8:24am

Cooper Brian Robert Anderson born to parents Ashley and Matthew Anderson. Cooper weighed in at 9lbs. 7oz.and was 21 inches long. The Anderson’s live in Delta. The Anderson’s are excited to welcome their new baby boy to their family.

# District 3 invites members of the community to attend an Al-Anon meeting

SPECIAL TO VALLEY HEALTH

Delta Al-Anon Family Groups (AFG) District 3 has invited members of the community to attend an Al-Anon meeting.

Al-Anon Family Groups, established in 1951, offers help and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one’s drinking, according to the group.

“Alcohol is a cause of family trouble for over one-third of Americans, according to the latest Gallup Consumption Habits poll,” AFG claimed in a press release. “37% report alcohol-related incidents have interfered with their family life, and about one

in 10 children live in households with at least one parent who suffers from alcohol use disorder.”

AFG, which includes Alateen for teens, addresses the importance of family recovery from the effects of alcoholism. While Al-Anon first started with the wives of AA members, Al-Anon today includes husbands, partners, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, friends and relatives who seek help because of a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.

Delta’s first Al-Anon group reportedly started in 1972, and the group now meets at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays at St.

Luke’s Church Episcopal Church, 145 W. Fifth St. There are three Al-Anon groups in Delta County and two more in Montrose. Ridgway, Gunnison, Crested Butte and Telluride meetings are part of District 3 Al-Anon.

Those seeking more information can call Elizabeth Wilcox, AFG District 3 public outreach coordinator, at 970-874-9832.

AFG is fully self-supported by voluntary contributions from members and the sale of literature. There are no dues or fees to attend a meeting, and no appointments or referrals are necessary.

AFG is a spiritual fellowship but not a religious one, and anonymity is an important spiritual principle of the Al-Anon program. Personal anonymity, as well as confidentiality of members sharing in the program, creates a safe place to get help, according to AFG.

“We often say, ‘Whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here,’” the press release said.

More information about Al-Anon and Alateen is available at al-anon.org.

*Report based on information from Al-Anon Family Groups District 3.*