

Walk **NEBRASKA**

Play It Safe in Cold Weather

Even as the temperatures drop below the 0° mark, many still enjoy those outdoor walks. Some even delight in playing outside in the cold. With snow, ice, and cold temperatures, there are some sensible things you can do to be safe as you venture into the winter weather.

When walking distances, you can take precautions to prevent injuries.

- First, wear warm clothing. Layered garments will trap air between layers and keep you warmer. Remember to cover your head and ears to keep body warmth in.
- Practice fall prevention. Remember that everything gets slick in the ice – steps, roads, sidewalks, even lawns. Be aware of the icy patches forming on your walking path. Clear ice and snow before walking or find another route. Wear low-heeled boots with treaded soles for any outdoor activity.
- Take it slow. Give yourself rest breaks often.

From sledding to ice-skating to building snowmen, playing outside in winter is great exercise and lots of fun. To keep safe as you venture out, consider the following:

- If you are going to be outdoors for any length of time, bring along water. Even though you may not be aware of it, your body dehydrates in cold temperatures. Drinking water every 15-20 minutes while exercising helps prevent dehydration.
- Whatever your outdoor play, leave motorized vehicles in the garage. Potentially fatal hazards arise when a sled, toboggan or other toy is being pulled by an ATV, snowmobile or pick-up. The vehicle driver can't predict what will happen, and it is very easy for the person on the toy to lose control.
- Avoid ponds and other areas of water. Unless specifically created for a skating pond, frozen water areas are too unpredictable to be safe. It is likely there are spots of thin ice.

Don't let winter weather keep you inside feeling like a couch potato, but do think safety as you venture out. A few precautions before going out will prevent injury or tragedy once you are in the great outdoors.

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