



# Be an Active Family during the Holidays

The holiday season can be a busy and stressful time for families. Along with those hectic schedules, the chilly winter weather can make it challenging for squeezing in physical activity each day. However, being active as a family can benefit everyone. Adults need at least 2½ hours of physical activity a week and children need 60 minutes a day. Follow these tips to add more activity during the winter months.

1. **Schedule time for physical activity.** Determine time slots throughout the week when most family members are available. Devote these times to doing something active.
2. **Turn off the screens.** Instead of watching TV or playing video games, create an indoor obstacle course, make a scavenger hunt, or play charades. Being active as a family not only creates special memories but helps to relieve holiday stress.
3. **Bundle up for outdoor play.** Create a snowman or “snow family.” Climb a snow mountain or make paths through the snow. No snow? Walk around your neighborhood to view lighting displays rather than taking the car.
4. **Don’t ditch the housework.** We all have experienced the tiring effects of doing chores. But those chores are a wonderful way to add physical activity and have a clean house – ready for holiday guests. Kids can help vacuum, dust, sweep the floor and even clean the windows!
5. **Treat the family with fun physical activity.** Enjoyable experiences such as an afternoon of ice skating or an evening of bowling make great gifts. A membership to the YMCA or recreational club can give your family fun opportunities for physical activity all throughout the year.

## Sources:

1. Team Nutrition, Let’s Move...Cold Weather Fun!
2. Eat Right Montana, 5 Ways to Enjoy 10 Minutes of Holiday Fitness Fun
3. Move Your Way for Parents, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <https://odphp.health.gov/moveyourway#parents>



For more information check out Family Fun on the Run:  
<http://go.unl.edu/familyrun>

## Tips for Outdoor Play in Cold Weather

- Plan outdoor time for the warmest part of the day.
- Cover children’s heads with a hat or cap. A hood can interfere with moving and seeing.
- Dress children in layers for warmth. Be sure they can move easily for fun and safety.
- Remember mittens or gloves and boots!

*This article has been peer-reviewed.*