

Exercise & Fitness: For Year-Round Safety

In its "Life Advice" pamphlet on fitness and exercise, the MetLife Consumer Education Center suggests that people should vary their exercise routines in order to prevent boredom. Another recommendation is to have at least one indoor exercise and one outdoor activity to accommodate changes due to travel schedules and weather.

In addition to easing stress, reducing weight gain and giving you something to do with your hands, regular exercise helps you sleep and gives you a sense of control over your life. It's all good. Of course, as Pathways to Freedom advises, "you should always check with your doctor before starting any new exercise routine. If you have any major health problems or are over age 60, you should check with your doctor before you start."

- 1 Let someone know where you're going and when you'll be back.
- 2 Carry identification with you when exercising outside the home.
- 3 Exercise indoors or try mall-walking when it's stormy. Don't risk a run-in with lightning or ice.
- 4 Build in warm-up and cool-down periods to decrease risk of injury.
- 5 Avoid strenuous exercise for one to two hours after eating.
- 6 Wear sturdy, well-fitting shoes appropriate for the activity.
- 7 Wear brightly colored clothing when exercising outdoors.
- 8 Add lights and reflector tape to your body or bike if you exercise after dark.
- 9 Wear helmets and safety pads appropriate for the activity.
- 10 Move against traffic if you must run or walk on the road.
- 11 Don't let headphones distract you from observing traffic and safety concerns.
- 12 Respect pollution alerts and exercise indoors when warnings are posted, especially if you have heart or lung disease. Avoid areas where traffic is heavy.
- 13 Take special care of your feet if you are diabetic or have vascular disease.

Source: the MetLife Consumer Education Center