



HARBOR PHYSICAL THERAPY WINTER NEWSLETTER

Tips for Walking in Snow or Ice

1. Wear boots or shoes with textured soles. Avoid shoes that have smooth surfaces on the bottom.
2. Watch where you walk. Avoid dark and shiny patches. Walking on the snow will give you better traction.
3. Avoid being off-balanced by carrying things in your hands. Use a backpack if you are walking long distances and keep your hands out of your pockets so you can use them for balancing yourself.
4. Take small, quick, shuffling steps if you are walking through an icy spot and keep your weight slightly forward. It's usually better to fall forward than it is to fall backwards.
5. Make sure you remove snow quickly from your steps or walk before it hardens and turns icy. Put some type of ice melt product down to ensure it won't be slippery.
6. Avoid walking in shaded areas where ice tends to build up.

During the winter, physical therapists see many patients with injuries from falling on the ice. Thinking ahead and taking your time could prevent a lot of bruises, sprains and even fractures.

How to Use a Heating Pad Safely

The colder weather is upon us which causes many people an increase in chronic joint or muscle pain. Are you using heat to treat your pain? If you find relief with these items it is important that you know how to use them safely.

- Do not sleep with a heating pad or you may get a burn.
- Only use a heating pad for 15-30 minutes per hour.
- Be extra careful if you are using a heating pad on an area of your body where you don't have as much feeling and avoid heating numb areas.
- Placing towels between the heating pad and your skin can help reduce the risk of burns.
- If you are using topical rubs and ointments like BenGay, only use them after applying a heating pad.

WINTER HUMOR

What is a snowman's favorite candy?

Answer- Snowcaps

What do you get if you cross a snowman with a shark?

Answer- Frost-bite

Who were Frosty's parents?

Answer- Mom and Pop Sicle

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