

Cold Weather Running: Is it safe?

Living in Colorado means we encounter many climate changes from summer highs in the 90's, to winter lows well below freezing with wind chills below zero. Many runners have asked me if running in the cold is safe. Running in the extreme cold can be safe if you follow this advice:

- 1. Wear visible clothing:** Make sure you wear clothes that are noticeable especially if you're running at night or in the snow.
- 2. Avoid Slipping:** When running on snow or icy surfaces be sure to wear Yak Tracks over your shoes or for the thrifty take a ¼ inch screws and drill them into the bottom of your running shoes.
- 3. Continue to Hydrate:** Whether you realize this or not you need to drink fluids just as much in the winter as you do in the summer. You're running and your body is working vigorously expending energy, you need to hydrate, whether its water or a sport drink throughout your workout.
- 4. Keep your running shoes inside:** Store your running shoes in the house so that they stay warm. Running shoes can freeze and running on a frozen or hard midsole when you are used to them being a bit softer can increase your chance of injury such as Plantar Fascia.
- 5. Wear layers:** Wear a Body Armour type of clothing as your first layer to help insulate. Wear hat, gloves, gator and a wind proof outer layer. Avoid cotton as your first layer as it will retain sweat and become very wet.
- 6. Run with the wind in your face:** It is a good idea to run into the wind to start off your run, and then return with the wind at your back. This will lessen the chilling effect of the wind on your body after you have perspired, and make the return trip easier.
- 7. Keep all skin covered:** Avoid any skin exposed to the cold especially your ankles. Wear tall socks so that your ankles are protected. Wear a face mask or slather your skin with Vaseline to help prevent the development of an early grizzled and weather worn "runner's face" or frostbite.
- 8. Use your best judgment:** If you are unsure about whether to run outside use your best judgment and find your nearest treadmill!