



This week...

Dashing Through the Snow

The holidays are almost here! We bet you are looking forward to sitting back, putting your feet up, and doing nothing for awhile. You deserve it. So, go ahead and take a few days to wind down.

Then, when you are ready to release that stress from your muscles, nerves and brain - get active! Increasing your physical activity will help you shed some of that 2020 stress and refresh your mind and body for the new year.

On November 26, 2020, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** updated their recommended Physical Activity Guidelines. Directly from the [WHO website](#), here are the renewed guidelines for adults that explain the amount, frequency, and type of physical activity needed for good health¹:

Adults aged 18–64 years

- **At least** 150 – 300 minutes of **moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity** throughout the week;
- or, **at least** 75 – 150 minutes of **vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity**; or an **equivalent combination** of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the week.
- Do **muscle-strengthening activities** at moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week
- **Limit the amount of time spent being sedentary.** Replacing sedentary time with physical activity of any intensity (including light intensity) provides health benefits, and

- To help reduce the detrimental effects of high levels of sedentary behaviour on health, all adults and older adults **should aim to do more than the recommended levels** of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity

Adults aged 65 years and above

- Same as for adults; and
- as part of their weekly physical activity, older adults should do varied multicomponent physical activity **that emphasizes functional balance and strength training** at moderate or greater intensity, **on 3 or more days a week**, to enhance functional capacity and to prevent falls.

[Check out the WHO website](#) for some key facts – that may surprise you! – regarding physical activity for adults, children and adolescents, along with specific guidelines for pregnant women, people with chronic conditions, and individuals with disabilities.

How to Be Active Over the Holidays

Many find it harder to be active in the Winter, especially this year when socializing and playing team sports are restricted.

It is important to be safe, wear good footwear, start slowly, and give your muscles, tendons, heart, and lungs time to adapt to any new activity. Always seek your physician's advice if you have any underlying health conditions and take any required medication. If you feel pain during an activity: stop!

Check out [HealthLinkBC](#) and [this article](#) for guidance on exercising during the pandemic.

Here are six tips for keeping active this season:

1. **Get outside as much as possible.** Unless you need to remain in quarantine, try to exercise outside as much as possible – take some ideas from our BCPVPA team below! The fresh air and sunshine will boost your mental health.
2. **Keep your workouts interesting.** Watch your favorite streaming show or listen to a podcast, audiobook or some great music while working out (*Spotify has Christmas playlists designed for workouts*). While walking, talk to a friend on the phone. **Try something new.** Many people find they are more comfortable trying

something new when no one else is watching, so try following an exercise video on YouTube. In your search, be specific to your needs, like 'kick boxing for over 50', 'golf-specific exercises' or 'Pilates for beginners'.

3. **Walk in a new way.** Immerse yourself in the full experience of walking outdoors by noticing the smell of the air, the variety of holiday lights and decorations, and the feel of the sun or the wind as you move. Bringing your attention to these things can give your conscious mind a break from your worries and unleash your creativity.
4. **Join the kids.** Play catch or tag, go for a bike ride, shoot baskets, or pass the soccer ball with your kids. Taking the focus away from schoolwork or chores by playing together can even help repair a strained relationship.
5. **Miss the gym? Create a home workout area.** If you have space available, designate an inviting area of your home to exercise and keep your equipment handy. Try using resistance bands, water bottles, or your own body weight to perform resistance exercises. Stair climbing is also an efficient strength training activity.

Wishing you a happy & healthy holiday from the BCPVPA team

May the winter break refresh, recharge and renew your mind and body. To close, we thought we would share some of our staff's favourite activities to keep us moving until we reconnect in January:

Kevin loves to go to Crossfit classes and tries to keep up with his daughter.

Don enjoys going for walks on the beach and watching the waves roll in on cold Winter days.

Rochelle will be found hiking in the snowy woods, admiring ice formations in mountain streams or dancing in her

Jessica likes to take long walks on a beach and watch the action on the ocean. She thinks windy and stormy days are wonderful.

Amorie loves to get onto her yoga mat for some mindfulness and movement.

Carol likes to run or walk each day. It clears her mind, gets her outdoors,

living room to the many HIIT YouTube videos posted by emkfit.

Sandra loves to walk in the woods with her dog, breathing in the silence while Scout inhales the wild scents.

Sharon loves to head to the Seawall for a run by the ocean on a crisp, sunny Winter day. She also enjoys taking in the beauty and serenity of the mountains while snowshoeing.

Liz likes to refresh in the outdoors: running, hiking, and snowshoeing in the winter. The clean air clears her mind, and energizes and feeds her soul.

Paige loves to whiz through the city on her bike, and also go for long walks in her neighbourhood while listening to podcasts.

and lets her observe the world around her. During the pandemic, she has been taking on virtual challenges for extra motivation.

Magdalena likes to start and end her day with a long walk – albeit in the dark. Seeing all the holiday lights along with the simple act of saying hello to fellow walkers and runners in the neighbourhood lifts up her day and spirits.

Darren likes to skate on a frozen lake, cross-country and downhill ski and will also get activity walking the dog and shoveling the driveway.

...and we thought the best way to close, was with Jennifer's perspective:

Jennifer walks every morning – leaving her house no later than 6:30am. Sun, rain, snow, or wind – it doesn't matter. She walks a minimum of an hour each weekday morning and no less than 3 hours on Saturday and Sunday. She takes photographs along the way to record all of the everyday moments – beautiful ones, kooky ones, moody ones, artistic ones, and just plain odd ones. With the luxury of being close to the Seawall, waterfront, and parks, her walks are – for the most part – silent. The quiet has a way of drowning out all the 'noise' we encounter in our everyday lives.

This helps her to remember that each and every day – especially these hard days – is full of special moments and that it is indeed a wonderful life.

If you would like to contribute, or have ideas about what you would like to see in the **ReFresh** series, we would love to hear from you: contact rochelle@bcpvpa.bc.ca.

Sources:

- 1 World Health Organization (2020) www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity