

Outdoor Fitness Training – Things to Consider...

On days when the sun is shining and a light breeze is present, there is nothing better than outdoor fitness training. Unfortunately, the weather is not always that perfect or predictable. At times, the thermometer rises, the humidity becomes extreme, or the rain begins to fall. Here are a few things to consider in dealing with the elements and surroundings when participating in an outdoor fitness class or training session:

- 1) **Sun protection** – Sunscreen and hats are a must.
- 2) **Attire** – Be prepared for all kinds of weather. Wearing too much when it's hot or too little when it's cold can make exercising uncomfortable. It's always a good idea to have an extra lightweight jacket for rainy or windy conditions.
- 3) **Extreme weather** – Take shelter if conditions become extreme (lightning, funnel clouds). Safety first!
- 4) **Hydration** – Maintaining fluid levels becomes even more critical in hot or humid conditions. Take lots of water breaks and bring cold sport drinks to help replenish fluid and electrolyte levels at the end of the session.
- 5) **Critters** – Have spray on hand in case bugs get bad.
- 6) **Exercise selection** - Consider the conditions when selecting activities. In extremely hot or humid conditions, decrease your intensity to avoid heat exhaustion. If it's rainy or the ground is wet (often a concern for early morning sessions), eliminate exercises that require quick changes of direction or using surfaces that may be slippery (such as a park bench or Bosu ball).



- 7) **Location** – Having adequate space is important. Find an area that is large enough to safely execute exercises without running into other people or other hazards such as trees. Be aware of uneven terrain and low spots that may not drain properly. If you are going into more wooded areas, stick to the trails to avoid contact with poison ivy.
- 8) **Equipment** – A great workout can be achieved without any equipment (except your body!) but you can shake

things up with portable items such as agility ladders, balance cushions, Bosu, foam rollers, etc. Park benches are great for exercises such as step-ups or dips and the TRX Suspension Training System can easily be fastened to a sturdy tree for an amazing full body workout. You should always have a first aid kit with you for dealing with cuts and scrapes or other minor injuries.

Exercising outdoors is a great way to get out, connect with nature, and get energized. Encourage others to follow these guidelines and enjoy all the benefits of an outdoor workout.

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