

IDAHO SPINE & SPORTS
PHYSICAL THERAPY

FALL PREVENTION AND STAYING ACTIVE DURING WINTER WEATHER

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Fall Prevention and Staying Active During Winter Weather

Brrr, it's cold out there! With winter and icy weather comes safety risks, such as getting injured from a strain while shoveling (or slipping on ice as you walk in a parking lot!)

Having your balance assessed this season could help you to avoid fall-related injuries. Give Idaho Spine & Sports Physical Therapy a call today to schedule an appointment, so we can help you feel steady on your feet!

Our therapists are the balance experts in the field and want to make sure our patients lower their fall risk as much as possible.

Staying Safe and Active In Winter

Between the limited daylight hours, chilly temperatures, and occasionally icy conditions outside, staying safe and healthy can be challenging. Anything you can do to keep active during the winter months is a step in the right direction!

Ice and snow are the biggest threats that winter poses, especially to older patients! Slipping on ice can result in nasty, painful falls. However, with preparation and planning, you can stay safe and active in the winter months. This may sometimes feel difficult to accomplish due to injuries and inclement weather, but knowing the proper steps to take can help you keep doing the things you enjoy no matter the conditions outside.

The most common injuries related to cold weather happen from falls on icy sidewalks, steps, driveways, and porches. Ideally, you will stay off the ice when possible. Walking on ice is extremely dangerous, regardless of how good your balance is. Do your best to keep your steps and walkways free of ice with sand, salt, or cat litter.

If you plan to run or walk on snowy, icy surfaces, attaching snow or ice spikes to your boots or running shoes will help you maintain traction to reduce the risk of falls. Be careful with wearing spikes on the pavement as they are designed to penetrate the ground and affect your balance.

Call Idaho Spine & Sports Physical Therapy today at (208) 939-0533 and schedule an appointment with our physical therapist. Find the relief you have been looking for!



How Can A Balance Expert Help Me Reduce My Fall Risk?

The physical therapists at Idaho Spine & Sports Physical Therapy are balance experts who can help you improve your balance and fight back against the risk of falling this winter.

Your therapist will perform a thorough physical examination to identify the source of your pain and/or injuries if they are present. Your mobility, strength, balance, and gait will be assessed as well to determine your fall risk. This information will help us create a program including targeted manual techniques, mobility work, strengthening, and any appropriate balance and gait techniques that can help keep you upright and on your feet this season!

What Should I Expect During Therapy?

The first thing you should know about therapy for balance is that this kind of therapy is not a "one size fits all" approach. Your program will be specific to your needs and wants and fit into your lifestyle.

Some of the interventions you can expect to experience at Idaho Spine & Sports Physical Therapy are:

- **Strengthening exercises:** These exercises will address muscle weakness which is often a primary contributing factor to poor balance and falls during winter weather. With strength and balance training, patients are better equipped to recover from unexpected lapses in gait or a momentary loss of balance to prevent falls.
- **Gait training:** Gait training will include activities to improve gait mechanics and increase your confidence and safety in navigating across different terrains (icy sidewalks, porches, parking lots) and around various obstacles, such as snow. Our physical therapists will also evaluate the need for an assistive device or perhaps adjust the device you are currently using.
- **Static and dynamic balance training:** This kind of training will be incorporated into your physical therapy treatment to help your body learn how to better respond to environmental challenges to their balance. For example, you may be asked to stand on one leg while performing a mentally-challenging task, such as reciting the alphabet or reading a paragraph of text out loud. Our physical therapists will also teach you balance strategies to help mitigate fall risk.

Endurance training may improve muscle endurance and improve aerobic capacity for activity. Both will reduce fatigue as a risk factor for falls when walking or completing daily tasks.

Contact Us Today For A Balance Assessment

Idaho Spine & Sports Physical Therapy wants our patients to feel safe and confident in their mobility and balance. Winter can be a difficult time for those with compromised balancing abilities; however, with the help of a physical therapist at our clinic, it doesn't have to be!

Call us today to have your balance assessed this snowy season. We can determine if you are at risk for falls, show you how to prevent them, and address any pain or discomfort you may be having. The wellbeing of our patients is important to us, no matter what season we're in!



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Phone Number

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Fax Number

(208) 939-3341

Clinic Hours

Monday - Friday | 7AM - 7PM

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