



Health Awareness

Lower Temperatures May Mean Increased Risk For Joint Injuries

(NAPSA)—With the cold weather months comes a storm of fun activities from skiing to snowboarding, ice-skating to sledding. Experts warn, however, that exercise coupled with freezing temperatures may leave joints more prone to injury.

"In general people are less active during the winter," said Karen Mohr, a physical therapist and research director at the renowned Kerlan-Jobe Orthopedic Clinic in California. "This means people are generally less fit in the winter months and tend to perform physical activity in spurts rather than on a regular basis."

According to Mohr, colder temperatures may also play a role in physical injury because muscles, tendons and joints take longer to warm up. "When these tissues are cold, they're less extensible and are therefore more prone to injury," added Mohr.

If you're a weekend ski warrior, or if you usually get stuck with snow shoveling duty, Mohr and the makers of Nature Made dietary supplements recommend the following tips to prevent joint injuries in an effort to make this a painless winter:

• Warm Up Before You Gear Up. Certainly, it's always important to take time out to warm up and stretch before engaging in any physical activity. Colder muscles, however, are more prone to injury. Therefore, it's important to take extra time to condition yourself before you do any outdoor activity. Whether you're shoveling your walkway or hitting the slopes, Mohr suggests doing a few sets of jumping jacks, going for a brisk 10 minute walk or anything to get your heart rate up to prepare your tissues for exercise and prevent joint aches and pains.



In cold weather, joints are more susceptible to injury. A joint supplement may help relieve pain and promote greater mobility.

• Don't Cram...Plan. It's important to remember that things like weekend ski trips should not be seen as a way to get back in shape. Rather, Mohr suggests, you get in shape before you go so that it's not as demanding on the joints and muscles. You don't need to leave the house to work out. Stay fit through the winter months by keeping up on household chores or try lifting weights and stretching at home while watching your favorite TV show.

• Fuel Your Joints. A healthy diet rich in antioxidants found in brightly colored fruits, such as oranges and berries as well as dietary supplements, may help promote good joint health. Try incorporating more vegetables such as leafy greens into your diet, perhaps in a warm bowl of soup. Also, nuts, which are handy snacks for the slopes, and other foods rich in vitamin D, such as mushrooms, eggs and fortified low-fat milk and cereals, may also work to encourage overall joint health and mobility.

• Try a Joint Health Supplement. In addition to diet, joint supplements are growing in popularity due to scientific research that demonstrates their effectiveness to relieve joint pain from overexertion, promote cartilage growth and improve proper mobility overall. Three of the most popular joint health supplements include Glucosamine, Chondroitin and Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM). These supplements are sold individually, in paired combinations, or even with all three ingredients such as Nature Made Triple Flex.

• Take a Pain-check. If you're experiencing pain, don't ignore it in the hope that it will just go away. This may be a signal that your joints are overworked and need a break. For a week, try replacing your regular workout regimen with a different activity such as cross-country skiing or ice-skating. If you've been treated by a physician for joint-related injuries in the past, visit a sports medicine specialist who can help design a fitness program for you. As always, if pain persists, visit your doctor.

For a free Nature Made Joint Health Holiday Stocking Stuffer, call the Pharmavite News Bureau toll free at (877) 866-2539. Supplies are limited and are available to the first 500 callers. One stuffer per family, please.

For additional information about Triple Flex or other Nature Made dietary supplements, call the Nature Made hotline at (800) 276-2878 Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pacific Time or log onto www.naturemade.com. Nature Made Triple Flex is currently available at mass merchant, drug, grocery and club store chains.