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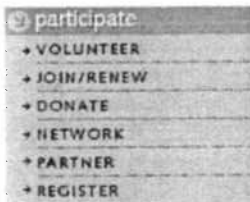
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For immediate release

Oct. 6, 2009

PROTECT AGAINST COLDS WITH EXERCISE

Expert offers on advice on when to get moving, when to stay in bed

INDIANAPOLIS – As the weather turns colder, the noses turn runnier – but incidence of colds can be greatly reduced by making exercise a part of daily life, according to an expert from the American College of Sports Medicine.

David C. Nieman, DrPH, FACSM, says that multiple studies have shown a 25- to 50-percent decrease in sick time for active people completing at least 45 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (such as walking) most days of the week.

"This reduction in illness far exceeds anything a drug or pill can offer," Nieman said. "All it takes is a pair of walking shoes to help prevent becoming one of the thousands predicted to suffer from the common cold this winter."

However, if you're already sick and aren't sure whether to hit the gym or the couch, Nieman offers these tips:

- **DO** exercise if your cold is confined to your head, such as illnesses with runny noses and sore throats.
- **DON'T** overdo it. If you have a cold, keep exercise to a moderate-intensity level (i.e., walking). Studies have not shown any negative effects of moderate exercise for those suffering from common colds.
- **DO** stay in bed if your illness is "systemic" – that is, beyond just the sniffles of a regular cold. Respiratory infections, fever, swollen glands and extreme aches and pains are all good reasons to rest up instead of work out.
- **DON'T** jump back in too soon. If you're recovering from a more serious bout of cold or flu, gradually ease back into training after at least two weeks of rest.

Nieman also advises exercising prior to receiving a flu shot. Moderate-intensity exercise just before getting the shot has been shown to improve the body's response to the vaccine, boosting immunity.

Nieman's advice aligns with the [Exercise is Medicine™](#) program, a component of which centers on including physical activity as a standard part of health care, like any other vital sign.

The American College of Sports Medicine is the largest sports medicine and exercise science organization in the world. More than 35,000 international, national, and regional members and certified professionals are dedicated to advancing and integrating scientific research to provide educational and practical applications of exercise science and sports medicine.

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