



Winter Sports-Have Fun, Avoid the Injuries.

Written by: [Dr. Amy Lavigne, B.Sc., D.C.](#)
[Tamara Gogol, B.Sc., P.T., MBA](#)

Winter is just around the corner, and with the cold weather comes snow. Winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, skating and tobogganing can all be a fun ways to get outside and exercise, but these activities often lead to injury, especially in the unconditioned body.

This winter, the team at [Bowness Optimum Wellness Centre](#) challenge you to get in shape and avoid injury by following a few tips:

- 1) Wear warm, light-weight, layered clothing: cold muscles are more prone to injury.
- 2) Warm up first: Derek Parra and the American Chiropractic Association suggest starting with 7-10 minutes of light aerobic activity such as jogging, biking or fast walking followed by these sport-specific exercises:
 - a. Skiing- do 10 to 15 squats: with your feet & knees shoulder width apart, slowly lower your buttocks keeping your knees aligned over your toes
 - b. Skating- do several lunges: take a moderate step forward with one foot. Keep your front knee over your toe and your shoulders over your hips. Step back and repeat with the other foot.
 - c. Tobogganing- pull your knees to your chest while you sit or lie on your back. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times
- 3) Wear shoes with good treads. If you feel yourself falling, try to land on your side or buttocks and roll with the fall.
- 4) Pace yourself, take breaks and drink plenty of water
- 5) The Scoop on Safe Shoveling - According to the Canadian Physiotherapy Association, shoveling snow requires as much energy as running 15 km/hr and one shovel load can weigh as much as 25 pounds! Shovelers sustain injuries every year from improper lifting, over extension or simply lifting too much snow. Some safe shoveling practices include:
 - a. Warming up.
 - b. Shovel frequently to avoid letting the snow pile up.
 - c. Choose a light-weight, push-style shovel. Spray metal shovels with Teflon to avoid sticking.
 - d. Push the snow forward, if you must throw it, throw straight into the snow pile to avoid twisting and turning.
 - e. Bend your knees and use your legs and arms to lift while keeping your back straight
 - f. Take breaks.
- 6) Avoid strenuous activities if you are in a lot of pain or overtired.
- 7) If you still feel sore, it may be time to visit your local health care practitioner. Optimum Wellness Centres offer a wide range of therapy including Chiropractic, Physiotherapy, Massage, Nutrition and Acupuncture. Please check our website for one of our 20 locations nearest you.