

Time to take your workouts outside

May 22 2017, by Regina Boyle Wheeler, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—The weather is warming up and beckoning you to take your workouts outside. But keep in mind that exercising outdoors is different from breaking a sweat at the gym, say experts at the University

of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

For instance, if you've been running or walking on a treadmill, going up and down hills and across uneven surfaces can be harder on your joints and muscles. You may even call on muscles that were in hibernation all winter.

So take it slow. Give yourself a transition period of a few weeks to avoid any injuries. Consider running on grass or a flat trail before pounding pavement. And make sure that your [running shoes](#) are up to the task—it might be time for a new pair.

After spending the winter spinning your wheels in spin class, it might seem that hopping on your bike would be a natural transition. That's true, but plan a shorter route and choose level pavement at first. Challenge yourself with more difficult routes later on, after you've gotten used to riding outside again. And, to avoid [head injuries](#), always ride with a snug, but comfortable, bike helmet, and obey the rules of the road.

Turning up the tunes with your headphones helped you get through your long gym workouts. But turn down the music outside or don't listen at all so that you'll be aware of your surroundings and—most of all—traffic, including the foot traffic of other fitness enthusiasts.

To enjoy your warm weather workouts even more, don't forget to apply (and re-apply as needed) sunscreen. Also, pack your water bottle and, if needed, allergy medication.

More information: The American Heart Association has health guidelines for [exercising safely in warm weather](#).

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Citation: Time to take your workouts outside (2017, May 22) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-05-workouts.html>

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