Dress for the Weather

In the cold winter months, how you dress to spend time outside for work or play can be the difference between a comfortable day and being miserable. Whether working or playing, it can be difficult to be productive when you’re cold. It’s important to dress for the type of weather you’ll be facing.

- Be sure to dress in layers. It’s best that the outer layers fit loosely, while the inner layers fit more tightly. The tighter fitting inner layers help to trap the body heat close to the body.

- Be careful not to over-bundle. Dressing too warmly can result in you feeling as cold as if you’d underdressed. This doesn’t seem to make sense but the answer is simple- sweat. Dressing too warmly will cause you to sweat more. Wet clothes conduct heat away from the body, making you feel colder.

- The outer-most layer should be used as a wind breaker. By blocking the wind the underneath layers will be able to be more effective.

- Don’t sweat it! Sweat will make the underlying layers wet. Wet clothes wick heat away from your body causing it to cool down. This is why layers are so important, as you heat up take layers off to help prevent sweating.

- Wear head protection. Mom was right all along! You lose about half of your body’s heat from your head. By keeping your head covered, you keep a lot of heat in your body. This opposite is also true; if you find that you’re heating up, you can quickly cool down by taking off your hat.

- Gloves are also important to help keep your body warm. It’s a good idea to wear a thin pair of gloves (like a silk-type material) under a pair of leather gloves. This combination offers very good protection.
Safety Talk

- Keep your feet warm. Just like your hands, your feet are prone to getting cold rather quickly especially if you’re not moving around a lot. Wool socks help to keep your feet warm but there are several other, newer materials that may not be as heavy (or as itchy). When choosing footwear, make sure that the socks you pick fit comfortably in the shoes. A too-tight fit can make the feet uncomfortable and suffer more from the cold.

- Falls can be a very real hazard in cold, icy weather. Not only be sure that your footwear is warm and well fitting, make sure they also have good traction. This traction will help to grip the potentially slippery surfaces you may encounter during the winter months.

Be prepared for spending time outdoors in the winter by dressing in warm clothes, hats, gloves and footwear.

Discussion Questions

How does working up a sweat make you feel colder in the winter?

Why is dressing in layers a better way to dress for outdoor activities?