**Walking in Winter**

Now that it is officially winter, yes December 21, 2018 was the Winter Solstice and First day of Winter. In early December it was very odd weather with freezing rain and temperatures above zero during the day. This freeze and thaw and freezing rain has made the back alleys and sidewalk very slick, so slick that one of my friend posted that it was slipperier that goose poop or whale snot – not sure how to verify that one but I will take her word for it.

What can you do to get outside and stay upright and surefooted? Proper gear is key, here is a short list of equipment/gear you need to keep your feet secure on the sidewalk:

* Footwear like winter boots
* Ice grips to slip over your boots
* Walking poles (optional)

The walking group that was scheduled on December 12 was one day after freezing rain came down. I went to the hall to see if anyone had braved the sidewalks and I was not surprised at all that no one showed up. I only made it there myself with the help of walking poles. I was wearing runners without ice grips (not recommended) and I had my walking poles. The walking poles are the only thing that kept me upright. By taking the bottom boot off of the pole I was able to use the pick that is there for just this kind of walking and I was able to sink the pick into the ice and walk. I tell you this so you know there is a way to still get outside and be active when area residents have not been able to get out and de-ice or sand the sidewalks. REMINDER: Sand is free to residents, you can pick it up at the Hall.

Other reasons to get outside and walking. The cold air really does help the body stay stronger and healthier, fresh air is always a great plus, getting the heart pumping is beneficial and moving your body gets the passive lymphatic system moving so toxins are flushed out of the body. Lymphatic movement is KEY to keeping the body healthy and vibrant. Another reason to get active in winter is to beat the winter blues. Moving the body stimulates the “happy or good” endorphins to be released and that is why you actually feel better after a walk or a workout.

Walking with or without poles is your choice, now that I am trained I wish I knew about them sooner. Walking without poles uses muscles in the legs and lower back and if you are mindful of your posture you can also engage you core muscles. Walking with poles your posture is upright, core muscles are engaged and you are using both your upper and lower body for an almost complete full body workout.

Please join me on Wednesday January 9, 2019 for Health Talk where I will go in depth on the benefits of walking with and without poles and I will demonstrate walking with poles. There is a promotion right now that you can purchase Urban Walking Poles at a significant discount through Dovercourt Community League and this discount is only available until February 22, 2019. If anyone would like to learn to walk with poles I need to know how many are interested and I can obtain some practice poles for those that don’t have a pair yet. Please email me and let me know, email is below. Let’s walk our way to health!

To your vibrant health and vibrant life

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