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MEET YOUR NEW FAVORITE WINTER SPORT

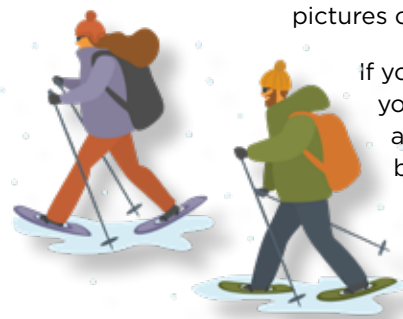
SNOWSHOEING IS A FUN, EASY OPTION FOR ALL AGES

When celebrities jet off to Aspen, Colorado, for their winter vacations, they might not all be going to ski. According to Forbes, Aspen is also a top snowshoeing destination — and that’s a sport that celebrities *and* ordinary people of all ages can enjoy.

Snowshoeing is a simple activity that dates back at least 6,000 years. It involves strapping large flipper-like attachments called snowshoes to your boots. The attachments distribute your weight and let you walk over banks of powder without sinking. You can use them to navigate flat plains, rolling hills, or steep mountains depending on the type of shoe you invest in.

On top of its unique history, these three major perks to snowshoeing just might make it your favorite winter sport.

1. **If you can walk, you can snowshoe!**
Unlike other energy-intensive sports like skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing is safe and relatively easy for folks of all ages. Some outdoorsmen and women snowshoe into their 70s and beyond, so a snowshoe outing is a great



way for grandparents and grandkids to bond while getting some aerobics in.

2. **Speaking of aerobics, snowshoeing is also a great workout.** When you strap on your snowshoes, you can burn up to 50% more calories than you would while hiking (depending on your pace and the type of terrain). Athletes who want to really amp up the exercise can even invest in jogging snowshoes!
3. **Last but not least, snowshoeing is scenic!** When you’re whizzing down a mountain on a snowboard or skis, you don’t have time to take in the view. But on snowshoes, you can soak up all of the winter beauty around you. You can even bring your camera along on your trek to capture pictures of any flora and fauna you see.

If you want to try snowshoeing this winter, make sure you start with an easy trail and consult your doctor and/or physical therapist before you go. Always bring along a backpack of emergency supplies like a blanket and first aid kit, too, and consider purchasing or renting hiking poles along with your snowshoes to boost your stability. For more insider tips, visit SnowshoeMag.com.

NEW HOLIDAY HOURS ARE HERE!

THIS CHRISTMAS, OUR TEAM WILL SPEND MORE TIME WITH FAMILY

The holidays are upon us! In the dental world, that usually means a rush of patients who need to finish their dental work before the end of the year. For the last two decades, my team and I have spent every December working longer hours and adding workdays to fulfill that demand. Usually, we only close for Christmas Day and maybe Christmas Eve, but after the last two years I’ve found myself reflecting more on how precious time really is.

This year, I’m doing something I’ve never done before: Setting shorter holiday hours for Great Smiles! My whole team gives so much to the care they provide our patients that I wanted to give them the best gift of all — more time with their loved ones! We can take this time off because we’ve already invested significant time, effort and resources to servicing our patients’ needs. From full digital workflows to same-day crowns, onlays and inlays insertions, and a more efficient clinical processes (Did you know our Invisalign cases are now finished in as little as half the time they took previously?!), we’ve overhauled our office to serve you better this year. With that in mind, here are our new holiday hours:

Great Smiles of New Jersey will temporarily close on Thursday, Dec. 23, to allow our team to celebrate the holidays and reopen after New Year’s on Tuesday, Jan. 4.

I told my kids about this plan a few months ago, and they are SO excited — maybe even more excited than I am! If you’ve been reading the newsletter for a long time, then you might remember we have a family tradition of baking cookies every year and giving them out to friends and family. Well, last year, I couldn’t make it home from work to help with the cookies.

My daughter Katie baked them all by herself, and although she was really proud of her effort (and I was proud of her, too!),



CPR training for Great Smiles of New Jersey and Great Smiles of Elizabeth with our trainer, Eric.

“Our appointment slots are filling up fast! Call now to schedule your spot before we close on Dec. 23. When you look back on your holiday photos, you’ll be glad you did!”

she told me it felt sad to bake them alone. That just broke my heart. You should have seen her face light up when I told her that not only would I be able to join her this year, but her dad was also taking time off work to help, too!

I’m already looking forward to getting into the kitchen and making huge batches of our family’s signature cookies. When our kids were young, my husband Rich baked all of the cookies. Now, Katie and Matthew have taken over a lot of the work, and our family is famous for our chocolate chip cookies, our spritz cookies (thick, buttery sugar cookies made with a cookie press), our ribbon cookies (tri-colored desserts that look a bit like ribbon), and our ranch cookies (a fancy oatmeal cookie that is NOT made with salad dressing — I promise). While they do that, Rich makes awesome rum balls.

The other holiday tradition I’m looking forward to is *simbang gabi*, or night mass. It’s a big deal in Filipino families like mine! Afterward, we come home to a huge spread of traditional food and snack all night long.

As I write this, our office closure is just a few weeks away. In a couple days, our team will kick off the holiday season with a celebratory dinner at Washington House Restaurant, and it will be all downhill from there!

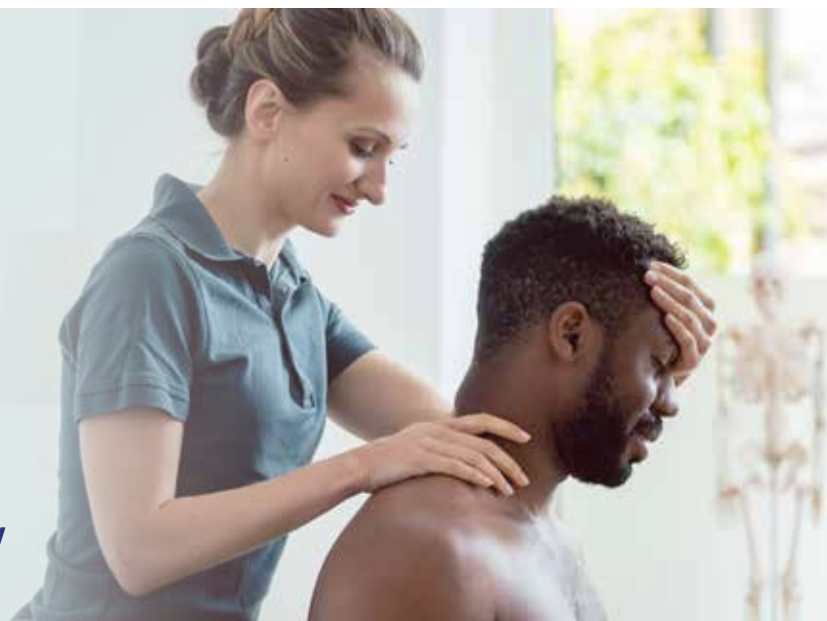
If you still need to book an appointment for a cleaning, smile design, veneers, crown repair, or another dental service to be completed before the New Year, now is the time to call us. Our appointment slots are filling up fast! Call now to schedule your spot before we close on Dec. 23. When you look back on your holiday photos, you’ll be glad you did!

The Great Smiles Family wishes you and your family Happy Holidays. May you have the best gift of all — time with your loved ones!

Dr. Michelle Weddle

PHYSICAL THERAPY FOR YOUR NOGGIN

GET HELP WITH VERTIGO, DIZZINESS, HEADACHES, AND MORE!



Picture a physical therapist in your mind's eye. What are they doing? You probably imagined them stretching a patient's arm, helping someone through leg exercises, or massaging away back pain. Are we right on the money?

All of these things are vital parts of the physical therapist's toolbox, but they don't give the whole picture. What most people don't realize is that physical therapy isn't just for body aches from the neck down. It can also treat head injury and ailments, neurological problems, and more! In many cases, the same techniques that ease your sore muscles and mobilize your joints can also help with headaches, dizziness, vertigo, and even concussions.



Ease headaches without medication.

Physical therapy techniques like manual therapy and exercise have been proven to decrease the intensity, frequency, and duration of headaches. In some cases, PT can eliminate headache symptoms altogether! Your therapist will start by identifying the type of headache you

have, then use targeted exercises (including eye exercises!) and other treatments to improve your mobility, reduce your pain, and help you kick medication to the curb.

Stop dizziness and vertigo in their tracks.

Dizziness and vertigo are terrible symptoms to live with. They can come with nausea, vomiting, anxiety, exhaustion, and even depression. These symptoms make it difficult to walk and do everyday tasks. You're also much more likely to fall and hurt yourself if you're dizzy, which is dangerous because more than 32,000 older adults die due to falls every year.

Fortunately, PT can help you avoid that worst-case scenario. Depending on the cause of your dizziness, your PT may provide exercises to improve your balance, strength, and flexibility. Certain therapies can even target the network of nerves between your inner ear and eyes that keeps your vision steady. These will make turning your head less disorienting.

Recover your balance after a concussion.

If you've been in a car crash, experienced a sports injury, or hit your head another way, a concussion might be causing your headaches, dizziness, or vertigo. These symptoms can often persist long after you see a doctor, but a PT can give you guidance on safe activities, working with you to restore your balance, strength, and endurance through a customized exercise program. Your therapist might also use manual therapy, massage, and electrical stimulation to reduce your symptoms.

Not every physical therapist specializes in treating head injuries and conditions like a neurological physical therapist or vestibular physical therapist does. But even if your PT doesn't offer these treatments, they can certainly recommend someone in the field! To learn more about the benefits of PT for your noggin, ask about them on your next PT or doctor's visit.



The drinks of choice for winter are usually warm and cozy — apple cider, hot chocolate, and wassail all have their place on the table. But no rule says you

have to drink something hot when it's snowy outside. In fact, a cold beverage might keep you warmer!

A study from the Thermal Ergonomics Lab at the University of Ottawa found that when you drink something hot, it can cause you to sweat more and, as a result, *will actually cool you off* more than a cold drink! Crazy, right?

Of course, you could probably reverse the heat loss by bundling up in a sweater so your sweat doesn't

SMOOTHIES AREN'T JUST FOR SUMMER ANYMORE!

5 HOLIDAY INGREDIENTS TO TOSS INTO YOUR BLENDER

evaporate. But if you're in your warm, cozy home, why not go for a cold drink like a smoothie? You can even add some holiday cheer to your healthy(ish) treat with one of these five seasonal ingredients.

- 1. Peppermint** — For a protein-rich smoothie that tastes like a candy cane, blitz together almond milk, yogurt, almond butter, mint leaves, ground cinnamon, and a few drops of peppermint extract.
- 2. Cinnamon** — If you love chocolate chip cinnamon rolls, you need to try the smoothie version! Frozen bananas, coconut milk, vanilla yogurt, cacao powder (which is packed with antioxidants), vanilla extract, and cinnamon are the secrets to a healthy version of your favorite Christmas breakfast.
- 3. Cranberries** — Cranberries are both festive and packed with vitamins and antioxidants that may help fight heart disease and cancer. To cash in on those benefits, whip up a smoothie with frozen cranberries, pear slices, goji berries, orange juice, coconut milk, and flax seeds.
- 4. Ginger** — What screams Christmas more than gingerbread? You can make a delicious smoothie version of the cookie with rolled oats, chia seeds, yogurt, nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, ground cloves, vanilla extract, and molasses to reap the anti-inflammatory and nausea-fighting benefits of ginger.
- 5. Eggnog** — Eggnog is far from a healthy drink, but it's a holiday favorite! To enjoy it in a new way, blend it up with a scoop of vanilla protein powder and ice after your workout.

TAKE A BREAK!



DIY HOLIDAY EGGNOG

Inspired by [TastesBetterFromScratch.com](https://www.tastesbetterfromscratch.com)

INGREDIENTS

- 6 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- Cinnamon and whipped cream, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks and sugar until light and creamy. Set aside.
2. In a saucepan over medium heat, stir together the cream, milk, nutmeg, and salt. Bring to a simmer.
3. Add a spoonful of the milk mixture to the egg mixture. Whisk vigorously and repeat, one spoonful at a time.
4. When most of the milk is whisked in, add the egg mixture to the saucepan.
5. Whisk until the liquid thickens slightly or reaches 160 F. Remove from heat and add vanilla extract.
6. Pour the eggnog into a glass container and cover. Refrigerate.
7. When the eggnog has thickened, pour it into glasses, garnish, and enjoy!