

Outdoor Fitness Safety Tips

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Now more than ever under COVID restrictions and stay-at-home orders, many of us want to take advantage of our ability to go outside to get some fresh air and get some exercise. Here are some helpful safety tips for when you are out for a walk or hiking the beautiful trails around our community.

- Before you head out, make a plan and communicate with your loved ones so in case of an emergency, someone knows where you are and how long you planned to be out.
- If you are planning on going for a short hike on the trails, take a friend with you, map your route and approximate how long it should take you and when you will return home.
- Leave jewelry and valuables at home if possible. If you bring anything of value, place them in a secure place on your person; or when driving to a location, secure your valuables out of sight before arriving at your destination.
- Take a copy of your ID and health insurance card with you.
- Bring a whistle, some water and a cell phone to help track your hike as well as give you the ability to communicate if you need assistance. For longer hikes, consider taking some food and a first aid bag.
- Check the weather and dress accordingly; sunblock, hats and sunglasses are great for day hikes.
- If you go out after daylight hours, make sure to wear reflective gear and bring a flashlight.
- Be mindful of others on the trails and sidewalks. If you need to pass someone, use your friendly voice to let them know you are coming up behind them. Whether you are walking, running or riding a bike, you can communicate in the same way. For example, "I'm on your left." This alerts others so you don't startle them or run into someone.
- Stay aware of your surroundings. As you greet people, practice your observation skills by thinking about how you would describe the person you are passing if you needed to report an incident.
- You can enjoy listening to music safely by only using one ear bud so your hearing is not impaired.
- Have a plan for when you encounter different types of animals.
- Abide by the trail signs; they are there for your safety.
- Remember to wear a helmet on bikes, skates and scooters. Remind and double check with any minors under your care that they are wearing their safety gear.

Be safe and enjoy the outdoors!

For more information on crime prevention and personal safety, please visit CrimePrevention.IrvinePD.org.