



Winter Safety Tips

Now that the holiday season has come and gone, the parties and family gatherings have ended, and all of the decorations have been taken down, it's important to begin preparing for some of the harsher aspects of the winter season, such as the inclement weather that tends to accompany this time of year.

Ice, snow, freezing rain, powerful winds, and subzero temperatures are not only annoying, but are also dangerous if the proper precautions are not taken. Seniors especially should follow these steps in order to prevent possible winter-related accidents.

Avoid Snow & Ice When Outdoors

Slips, trips and falls can be devastating, especially when they cause broken bones and head injuries, or worse. Take extra caution this winter to avoid snow and ice.

- Always walk on cleared sidewalks and pathways, avoiding wet, snowy or icy patches.
- Wear shoes or boots with good rubber non-skid soles that have plenty of traction. If using a cane, walker, or wheelchair, ensure the rubber tips/wheels have been recently inspected and are in good condition to prevent skidding and sliding.

Cold Weather/Temperatures

- When temperatures and wind chill result in extreme cold, stay indoors whenever possible. In these conditions, frostbite can occur in less than 10 minutes.
- When venturing outside, be sure to wear several layers of comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. Be sure that your extremities, such as your fingers, toes and ears are covered. Do not stay outside for long periods of time.
- If you notice any stinging or burning sensations after being exposed to the cold, especially in your extremities, get inside immediately.
- Always wear a hat. You lose up to 50% of body heat through the head.
- Only shovel snow when absolutely necessary. Exercise in cold temperatures can put a much greater stress on the heart muscles, especially for seniors or those not accustomed to exercise.
- If traveling in a vehicle, it is important to have an "emergency kit" in your trunk or similar location. The kit should include a warm blanket, bottles of water, hand warmers and a flashlight at the minimum. An extra can of gas is also useful.
- It is also important to carry a cell phone or some sort of emergency alert system when leaving your home in the winter. Doing so will allow you to reach out for help in the event you fall or get stranded outdoors.

continued on pg. 3 - 'Physical Therapy'

Check for Safety:

A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults

Falls At Home

Each year, thousands of older Americans fall at home. Many of them are seriously injured, and some are disabled. In 2002, more than 12,800 people over age 65 died and 1.6 million were treated in emergency departments because of falls.

Falls are often due to hazards that are easy to overlook but easy to fix. This checklist will help you find and fix those hazards in your home. The checklist asks about hazards found in each room of your home. For each hazard, the checklist tells you how to fix the problem. At the end of the checklist, you'll find other tips for preventing falls.

FLOORS:

Look at the floor in each room.

Q: When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture?

Ask someone to move the furniture so your path is clear.

Q: Do you have throw rugs on the floor?

Remove the rugs or use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so the rugs won't slip.

Q: Are there papers, books, towels, shoes, magazines, boxes, blankets, or other objects on the floor?

Pick up things that are on the floor. Always keep objects off the floor.

Q: Do you have to walk over or around wires or cords (like lamp, telephone, or extension cords)?

Coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall so you can't trip over them. If needed, have an electrician put in another outlet.

STAIRS AND STEPS:

Look at the stairs you use both inside and outside your home.

Q: Are there papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the stairs?

Pick up things on the stairs.

Always keep objects off stairs.

Q: Are some steps broken or uneven?

Fix loose or uneven steps.

Q: Are you missing a light over the stairway?

Have an electrician put in an overhead light at the top and bottom of the stairs.

Q: Do you have only one light switch for your stairs (only at the top or at the bottom of the stairs)?

Have an electrician put in a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs.

You can get light switches that glow.

Q: Has the stairway light bulb burned out?

Have a friend or family member change the light bulb.

Q: Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn?

Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove the carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads to the stairs.

Q: Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the stairs?

Fix loose handrails or put in new ones. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs and are as long as the stairs.

KITCHEN:

Look at your kitchen and eating area.

Q: Are the things you use often on high shelves?

Move items in your cabinets. Keep things you use often on the lower shelves (about waist level).

Q: Is your step stool unsteady?

If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

BATHROOMS:

Look at all your bathrooms.

Q: Is the tub or shower floor slippery?

Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower.

Q: Do you need some support when you get in and out of the tub or up from the toilet?

Have a carpenter put grab bars inside the tub and next to the toilet.

BEDROOMS:

Look at all your bedrooms.

Q: Is the light near the bed hard to reach?

Place a lamp close to the bed where it's easy to reach.

Q: Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark?

Put in a night-light so you can see where you're walking. Some night-lights go on by themselves after dark.

Other Things You Can Do to Prevent Falls

- Exercise regularly. Exercise makes you stronger and improves your balance and coordination.
- Have your doctor or pharmacist look at all the medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines. Some medicines can make you sleepy or dizzy.
- Have your vision checked at least once a year by an eye doctor. Poor vision can increase your risk of falling.
- Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.
- Wear shoes both inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.
- Improve the lighting in your home. Put in brighter light bulbs. Florescent bulbs are bright and cost less to use.

Fight the Winter Blues

"The Winter Blues" or SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) differ from clinical depression. Some of the symptoms of the Winter Blues include:

- Significant or lasting sadness
- Decreased Energy Levels
- Boredom
- Marathon Napping
- Low Self- Esteem
- Fatigue
- Frequent Crying
- Sleeping too much
- Overeating / Weight Gain

Turn that Frown Upside Down and Fight the Winter Blues!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Fight Cabin Fever**
Find a mall or an indoor facility where you can enjoy an afternoon walk.
- **Expose yourself to more light.** Sit in or near a sunlit window, add more light to your living room.
- **Keep a regular routine/schedule.**
- **Watch movies with summer themes.**

- **Establish a regular sleep pattern.**

- **Exercise regularly.**

- **Eat well balanced meals/avoid overeating.**

CareOne Homecare Services offers Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy as well as Skilled Nursing and Home Health Aides.

Our goal is to keep the patient in their home as long as possible...We would love to have you as a patient, call us today!

Safety Tips ...continued

- It's safest to have uniform lighting in a room. Add lighting to dark areas. Hang lightweight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- Paint a contrasting color on the top edge of all steps so you can see the stairs better. For example, use a light color paint on dark wood.

Additional Safety Tips

- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone.
- Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and can't get up.
- Think about wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Recipe of the Month



By: Emma Carper, Portland, IN

Emma writes:

"This is one of our family recipes served at our family reunions. We all love it!! It doesn't last long. I love our "bingo" games sponsored by Care One. Thanks, I know who to call if I ever need help!"

Butterscotch Delight

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

1 1/2 Sticks Butter
1 1/2 Cups Chopped Pecans
1 1/2 Cups of plain flour
Mix and put in 13x9 pan
Bake 30 min or until brown

Mix 1 cup powdered sugar
8 oz cream cheese
1/2 large bowl cool whip
Put on the above cooked crust

Then 2 small boxes of instant butterscotch pudding with 3 cups of milk. Stir until thick, then put on above mixture.
Top with remaining cool whip.

Submit a recipe and be entered in to win a \$25 gift card if your recipe is chosen for the newsletter!

If you have a recipe that you would like featured in our newsletter, please send it to:

Care One Home Care Services
Attn: Jana Hiestand - "Recipe"
3301 W. Bethel Ave.
Muncie, IN 47304

Or submit it via email to:
jana.hiestand@careonehomecare.com
Subject line: "Recipe"

We can put only one recipe in each newsletter, if it's not in the upcoming newsletter; it could possibly be in the next issue. Thank you!



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Recover At Home With Us

We love hearing from you! Please contact us with your questions, comments, or feedback!

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PREVENTION

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BLUE

FALL

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WEATHER

CABINFEVER

INJURY

SLEET

WINTER

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