



Promoting A Safer and Healthier Community Since 1854

Tips to Stay Healthy During the Cold Weather

1. Maintain a healthy lifestyle and prepare for the cold weather:
 - Get vaccinated against the flu! The spread of flu peaks during the cold winter months.
 - Avoid drinking alcohol, caffeinated beverages, or using drugs and going outside.
 - Review family communication plan.
 - Prepare your car for winter travel and emergencies.
 - Make sure that all indoor heating devices are working properly and used according to direction.
 - Eat a healthy diet and maintain hydration.
 - Keep a water supply.

2. Know the signs and symptoms of hypothermia and seek warming and care immediately to avoid complications. **DO NOT IGNORE SHIVERING** – It is the first sign that the body is losing heat!

Adults: shivering, feeling tired, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, drowsiness/sleepiness

Infants: bright red, cold skin; very low energy, may not feed well

3. Check on your neighbors and family.

Hypothermia is most common in elderly people, babies sleeping in cold rooms, children left in cars, individuals using drugs and alcohol, those with mental illness, those who work outdoors, and the homeless.

4. If you have to go out, dress for the C-O-L-D
 - C = Keep it Clean; soiled outwear makes the outer layer more prone to air loss
 - O = Avoid Overheating; excess sweating increases heat loss
 - L = Wear clothing loose and layer; loose layers increase the amount of warm air surrounding the body
 - D = Keep clothing Dry; wet clothing chills the body more rapidly

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Infants need to be kept warm. DO NOT USE BLANKETS. Dress them in warmer clothing such as footed pajamas, one-piece wearable blankets, or sleep sacks to prevent hypothermia and the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Adults and children should wear:

- a hat
- a scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth
- sleeves that are snug at the wrist
- mittens (they are warmer than gloves)
- water-resistant coat and shoes
- several layers of loose-fitting clothing

For more information on how to prepare for cold weather and winter storms,

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/>

Winnebago County Health Department - www.wchd.org

Illinois Department of Public Health - [Weathering Winter](#)

Illinois Emergency Management Agency - [Winter Weather Preparedness Guide](#)

American Red Cross - [Winter Storm Preparedness: About Winter Storms](#)

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