



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Winter Weather Safety Tips

With winter weather in full swing, exposure to slips and falls significantly increase due to the hazardous weather conditions from freezing rain, snow and ice. Preventing these incidents are key during the coldest months by removing and monitoring ice and snow from walking and driving surfaces. Along with the risk of slip and falls is the risk of frost bite, frost nip, heart attack, hypothermia and many more health effects due to extended exposure time in severe weather conditions.

Below are prevention tips from OSHA, local agencies¹, and the Chatham Borough Board of Health to help keep you safe this winter.

Slip Prevention Tips

- Modify your step: when transitioning from outside to inside and on steps, adjust the way you walk. Walk with short, deliberate steps where the mid-foot strikes the ground first (not the heel).
- Be careful of glaring lights. Give your eyes time to adjust with varying lighting conditions to limit risk of falling.
- Slips by falling backward are the most common slip occurrence. When walking in slippery conditions, the body should be centered over the feet. Pay attention and do not become distracted with your phone, reaching for objects, etc.
- Use railings whenever possible.
- Look before getting out of vehicles. If area is coated with ice, test surfaces by tapping with your foot, move carefully when walking on different surface types.

Cold injury Prevention

- Layer up!
- Wear silk or synthetic (polypropylene) fabrics as inner layers of clothing to keep moisture away from the body. Thermal wear containing silk or synthetic fabrics also will hold more body heat than cotton.
- Do not use tight clothing as it reduces blood circulation. Warm blood needs to be circulated to the extremities.
- Cover face, ears and head with hats, scarves, ear muffs.
- Hats will help keep your whole body warmer! Hats reduce the amount of body heat that escapes from your head.
- Insulated gloves (water resistant can be helpful) to protect the hands.
- Insulated and waterproof boots to protect the feet.

For more information about prevention tips and health effects from severe cold weather effecting your health, please call the Madison Department of Health at 973-593-3079 between 8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

In the case of an emergency call 911.

¹ "Managing Slips & Fall Risks during Winter Months" The MEL Safety Institute. Dec. 2016