



## Winter Fall Prevention & Safety Tips

Falls have become the leading cause of traumatic brain injury, and anyone can fall on a slippery surface. Follow these precautions, and share them with family and friends!

### PREVENTION TIPS

- **Plan ahead.** Plan your trips out around the weather. If you don't need to go out, don't. Wait for the weather and sidewalks to clear.
- **Slow down.** Allow yourself enough time to get where you are going. Your chances of falling increase when you are running late and rush.
- **Take the path of least resistance.** Look for the safest route to your location, AND the safest route into the building. Choose alternate routes when necessary. For example, if the sidewalk or entrance you typically use is icy, find a different route that perhaps has been shoveled or has better sunshine for melting.
- **Ask for help.** Have someone help you cross the street or navigate an icy patch, or help with snow removal.
- **Be your own advocate.** If entrances or sidewalks are not safe, ask people to help remove the snow or use deicer. Businesses and property managers can help eliminate the dangers.
- **Choose the right shoes.** Be aware of your footwear and choose the boots or shoes that give you the greatest traction.
- **Pay attention.** Walk consciously. Be alert to the possibility that you could quickly slip on an unseen patch of ice. Avoid the temptation to run to catch a bus or beat traffic when crossing a street.
- **Heed parking lots.** Be extra careful getting in and out of your car. Hold on to your door or car as you get out to give yourself extra support. Watch for cars stopping and sliding in parking lots.
- **Keep your vision sharp.** Poor vision can make it harder to get around safely. Have your eyes checked every year and wear your glasses or contact lenses to help you see the most clearly.
- **Walk like a penguin.** When walking on ground that is slippery from ice and/or snow, take short, shuffling steps, walk as flatfooted as possible.
- **Keep your hands free.** Wear gloves so you can keep your hands out of your pockets to help you balance. Avoid carrying heavy loads or children that may cause you to become off balance.
- **Remove snow immediately.** Keep your porch stoops, steps, walks and driveways free of ice by frequently applying ice melting granules. This is the best way to prevent formation of dangerous ice patches. Waiting for it to melt can sometimes take days! Keep deicer and a shovel/broom within reach of your door, or just inside your house.