

## Winter Health Tips

As the days of winter are upon us it is important to remember that some individuals are at an increased risk for health related issues and illness such as **Hypothermia**.

### Take time to educate yourself about:

- Taken from: <http://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/hypothermia/index.php>

Warning Signs of Hypothermia Which May Include:

- Uncontrollable shivering. In severe cases of hypothermia, shivering stops
- Numbness
- Glassy stare
- Apathy
- Weakness
- Impaired judgment
- Drowsiness
- Slow or slurred speech
- Exhaustion
- Loss of consciousness
- In infants, the skin turns bright red and cold
- Infants with a very low energy level

Certain medical conditions and treatments may adversely affect an individual's response to the cold weather. **Your practitioner can discuss with you if any conditions or medical treatments apply and provide specific information regarding what to observe for and when to seek medical treatment.**

### Other things to consider:

Be aware of cold weather advisories or warnings in your area- Information may be obtained from your local radio, television, newspaper or at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov>. Knowing this information can assist with planning outdoor activities during the winter months.

- Severe winter weather can include snow, subfreezing temperatures, strong winds, ice or heavy rain and requires planning ahead.
- Taken from: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Encourages Seniors And People With Special Needs To Prepare For Winter:
  - **Winter Weather Advisory** means that cold, ice and snow are expected.
  - **Winter Storm Watch** means severe weather such as heavy snow or ice is possible in the next day or two.
  - **Winter Storm Warning** means that severe winter conditions have begun or will begin very soon.

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Have an emergency plan in place now for electrical backup for any necessary medical equipment. Your emergency plan should also include options for communication with others in the event that land lines are disrupted. Examples would be to have a charged cell phone or pager. Remember to include your service animals and pets in the emergency plan as well as who will assist you in the event you would need to leave your home. <http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/readyin3/weather.php> has additional emergency planning information including recommended amount of medication, food and water that you should have on hand.

FEMA recommends an emergency supply kit that includes:

- ❖ A battery or hand crank powered radio, extra flashlights and batteries, and at minimum a week's supply of food and water
- ❖ Adequate clothing and blankets for warmth
- ❖ First Aid supplies

Wear appropriate warm, layered clothing including hats, gloves or mittens, scarves and appropriate foot wear.

**Other winter related resources:**

Information regarding Winter Weather Planning <http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather> and <http://www.fema.gov>