

10 top tips for older adults to keep well over winter.

- 1. Keep your home warm and well-insulated.** Aim to keep your main living area around 21°C (70°F) and the bedroom at a minimum of 18°C (64°F) overnight. Use draft excluders for doors and windows. Open curtains during the day to let in sunlight and natural warmth. Close them as soon as it gets dark to keep the heat from escaping.
- 2. Service heating systems.** Before winter arrives, have your boiler and other heating systems serviced by a qualified professional to ensure they are working efficiently and safely.
- 3. Dress for cold weather.** Wear several thin layers of clothing rather than one thick one. Layers trap warm air, providing better insulation. Opt for materials like wool, cotton, or fleece. Wear hats, gloves, thick socks, and slippers to prevent heat loss from your head, hands, and feet.
- 4. Stay active indoors.** Avoid sitting still for more than an hour at a time. Simple exercises like stretching, moving your arms and legs, or gentle housework will boost your circulation and help you stay warm.
- 5. Eat and drink hot items.** Enjoy regular hot meals like soups and stews and drink plenty of warm fluids throughout the day. Food provides energy that helps keep your body warm.
- 6. Forward plan for bad weather.** Have a supply of tinned foods in the cupboard. Order prescriptions a good time in advance in case of bad weather. Register with your energy supplier for their Priority Services Register (PSR) if you are of pension age, have a health condition, or rely on medical equipment. This ensures you receive extra support during power cuts. Have some cash put by.
- 7. Get appropriate footwear.** Wear shoes and slippers with non-slip, rubber soles to prevent slips and falls on wet or icy surfaces.

- 8. Be sensible when going outside.** If it's icy and you need to go out, wait until lunchtime so it's less slippery. Ask family, friends, or neighbours to clear snow and grit paths to your home.
- 9. Look after your mental well-being.** Keep your mind active with hobbies like reading, puzzles, or listening to music to help with mental health during the winter months. Schedule regular phone or video calls with loved ones to stay connected and reduce feelings of loneliness.
- 10. Be prepared if you care for someone.** Check in on the person - a simple phone call or a pop-in visit can make a significant difference to their well-being. Work through this list with them to ensure they are prepared. Have an emergency or contingency plan in case you aren't able to support them.