

Handout 9

Winter active, winter smart

Seniors can be active with confidence in winter

Winter is a wonderful time of year! The air is crisp and the ground is snow covered. It is the perfect time to enjoy a walk to take in the beauty of the season. But, winter can be a challenging time of year to get out and about. Here are a few suggestions to help you stay active and safe in winter.



Dress for the Occasion

Dress in layers. Long underwear, a fleece or wool sweater, a wind/water proof jacket are good options. Avoid wearing cotton next to your skin. It absorbs sweat and stays wet.

Wear a hat and scarf to prevent heat loss. On very cold days cover nose and mouth with a scarf. Mittens keep hands warmer than gloves and may be easier to wear.

Wear bright colors or add reflective material to clothing, so others can see you better. Wear sunscreen, SPF 15 or more - just like in the summer! Put it on any skin exposed to the sun, including lips. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes on sunny days.

Put Your Best Foot Forward

Wear good boots and warm socks. Make sure there is room for your toes to wiggle. A good boot will:

- ◆ be warm and water proof
- ◆ have a thick, non-slip tread sole
- ◆ have a wide, low heel
- ◆ be light weight

Check weather and sidewalk conditions before going out. If weather prevents you from going out try:

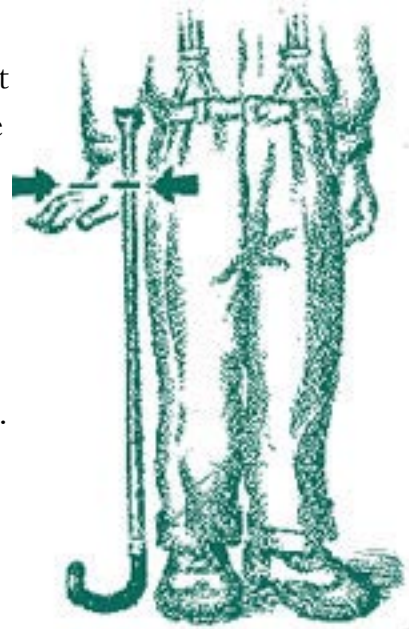
- ◆ home exercises
- ◆ walking at home
- ◆ mall walking

Wear ice grippers on footwear to help prevent falls on snow and ice.

- ◆ Grippers improve walking on hard packed snow and icy surfaces.
- ◆ Grippers must be removed when walking on smooth surfaces such as stone, tile, and ceramic.
- ◆ Before buying the grippers, check that you are able to attach and remove them from your boots.

Get Around Safely

Use a cane to help with balance. Have it fitted to the right height for you. When cane is upside down, end should be at wrist level. Speak to your doctor or pharmacist about how to use your cane properly.



Attach an ice pick at the end of your cane. Cane picks will be slippery on hard surfaces so be sure to flip it back as you get indoors. Picks are available at most drug stores.

If you need further support use a walker. Cost can be covered by government programs. Talk with your doctor.

Wear hip protectors, a lightweight belt or pant with shields to guard the hips. It can help protect the hips against fractures and give added confidence.

Adapted from Winter Active Winter Smart, City of Ottawa

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