

## Be Prepared

- Keep an eye on the weather forecast
- Keep a range of basic food and vegetables in the freezer and cupboards (don't forget your pet food)
- Keep a couple of bottles of clean water in storage in case of frozen pipes
- Ensure you have a good supply of all the medication you take each day plus basic cough and cold remedies
- Keep a snow shovel, rock salt, torch, spare batteries and a first aid kit handy.

**IF YOU NEED HELP THROUGH THE WINTER MONTHS CALL HELP DIRECT ON: 0303 333 1111.**

## Look out for others in need

- Keep an eye on friends, relatives or neighbours who may be more vulnerable to cold, especially if they suffer from any on-going medical conditions.

**IF YOU WANT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP OTHERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO COPE WITH COLD SPELLS CALL HELP DIRECT ON: 0303 333 1111.**



# Keep Warm, Keep Safe, Stay Well.



**Working in Partnership to provide extra services over the winter to help keep you healthy, safe and warm.**



Are you, or someone you know struggling to cope with the cold weather?

To find out what is available to you and others this winter call Help Direct on:

**0303 333 1111**



## Why Keeping Warm Matters

Whether young or old, we are all more likely to catch a cold or flu in winter.

Cold weather can also cause serious health problems. This means it is essential to keep you and your home warm.

Your health may be in danger if the temperature in your home falls below 14 degrees or is higher than 27 degrees for a prolonged period.

A cold home can cause:

- Breathing problems
- Heart attacks
- Strokes
- Hypothermia
- Accidents in the home

Hypothermia is caused by getting too cold. Older people, babies and those with certain health conditions are among those more at risk.



Shivering can be used as a guide to how severe hypothermia is. If a person can stop shivering on their own, the hypothermia is mild. If they can't stop shivering, it's moderate to severe. Severe hypothermia needs urgent hospital treatment.

## What you can do to help yourself?

**Insulate your home** Fit loft and cavity wall insulation and draught proofing. Hang a thick or thermal lined curtain at front and back doors. Insulate your hot water tank and pipes to keep them warm and prevent bursts.

**Central heating & hot water** Make sure your heating system is in good working order and use timers and thermostats to regulate the temperature.

**Keep your home at the right temperature** Living rooms should ideally be around 21 degrees and the bedrooms around 19 degrees. Heat all the rooms you use in the day, make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed. In very cold weather, set the heating to come on earlier, rather than turn the thermostat up. This means you won't be cold while you wait for your home to heat up.

**Keep doors and windows closed** to help reduce draughts around your home.

**Keep moving** Take regular exercise if you are able to or if not, walk around every hour or do household chores to keep yourself warm and mobile. If walking is difficult wiggle your arms and legs or do exercise in your chair.

## Or we may be able to help you with...

**Stay indoors during a cold spell** Don't venture out in very cold or icy conditions unless it is essential. If you do go outdoors, make sure you wrap up warmly and wear appropriate footwear.

**Dress appropriately** Wrap up warmly. Several thin layers are better than one thick jumper. Wool, cotton and fleecy synthetic fibres are a good choice. Wear thermal underwear, warm tights/socks and slippers. If sitting for long periods a shawl or blanket or even a woolly hat will provide a lot of warmth.

**Have a flu jab** The flu virus changes every year so get your jab EVERY YEAR. This is important for elderly people, children, pregnant women and people with health conditions (as advised by your GP).

**Eat for warmth** Have regular hot meals and hot drinks as these will provide warmth and energy.

**Get financial support** Make sure you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to and take advantage of the grants available for insulation and heating measures. Ensure your energy supplier and tariff is best for you.

To find out more about how we may be able to help you with the above, call Help Direct on: **0303 333 1111**