



# Coping with Cold Weather

## Winter weather

Scientists agree that our winters are getting warmer and milder. But we're still prone to periods of extreme cold and severe weather. When it is cold, it becomes harder to heat our homes and we may struggle to move around safely. Household power demands increase and we may need to adapt our lifestyle to cope.

The elderly, the very young and those with serious medical conditions are at risk in cold weather. People with breathing problems may find it more difficult to catch their breath and people with mental health needs may find their symptoms are worse.

## Out and about

Tick when complete

- Choose waterproof shoes or boots with good support and strong grips. You can also get clip on overshoes to help deal with ice and snow.
- When cycling, beware of poor visibility and icy roads. Wear bright clothing, use lights and always wear a helmet.
- Use public transport to avoid the risk of your car skidding in ice.
- If you're reluctant to make a journey, make sure you stay in contact with friends and relatives by phone or email so they know you are safe.
- Keep a check on vulnerable neighbours and make sure they have all they need.



# At home

Tick when complete

- Keep your living areas at around 70°F/21°C and bedrooms around 64°F/18°C. Check your heating system is working and your home is insulated before winter starts.
- Close the curtains at dusk and make sure they don't block radiators or heaters.
- Seal draughts with excluders around doors and windows, particularly where doors meet the floor. Do not block air vents as heating systems need ventilation.
- Lag pipes with insulation, especially those in exposed places and protect outdoor taps. Make sure you know where your stopcock is in the event of a burst water pipe so you can turn the water off quickly.
- Make sure you have a good supply of food and drink and prescription medicines in case you are unable to get out. Make sure your 'flu jab is up to date.
- You may be able to get help towards the costs of insulating and heating your home, and have a 'priority service' from your energy supplier, which can check your boiler and make sure it's safe and efficient. Call 01642 243183 if you need advice.

# Keeping yourself warm

- Eat well. Hot drinks and meals will help. Eat a good range of foods regularly. If you find your appetite increases, eat slightly larger portions.
- Keep moving. Exercise generates heat and will keep you warm, and getting out and about will make you feel happier. Spread any activity across the day to avoid sitting or standing for too long.
- Wear plenty of layers. Thermal underwear will help and cover your hands, feet and head where possible. Put on an extra jumper if you're feeling chilled.
- Make sure you receive all the benefits you are entitled to; call Welfare Rights on 01642 729242.

Find out how sustainable you are at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/one\\_planet\\_middlesbrough](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/one_planet_middlesbrough)

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