



Winter Health Advice For Residents

Cold and wintry conditions, combined with shorter days, can make many of us feel poorly. However, with a few simple precautions, most people can be ready for the really cold weather and avoid much of the misery associated with it.

Top 10 tips for staying healthy this winter:

1. Have the flu vaccine: it's free to the over 65s, those with serious medical conditions, carers and pregnant women. Contact your GP or practice nurse. The nasal spray is offered free for young children, visit www.nhs.uk/flu for details. If you are not in one of these groups you can get one for around £10 at many supermarkets and pharmacies. Some pharmacies offer jabs free on the NHS.
2. Heat your home to at least 18C/65F, it can help minimise health risks. If heating your whole home is a problem, heat your living room during the day and your bedroom just before you go up to sleep.
3. If you can, get up and move around. If your mobility is limited, do some chair exercises to help you stay warm and active.
4. Good grips: if you need to go outside wear shoes with slip resistant, good grip soles.
5. Hot food and warm drinks: Keep well fed and hydrated. Drink lots of water as well as warm drinks.
6. Stock up on basics like soup, tinned fish, long life milk and medicines such as paracetamol and ibuprofen in case you can't get out of your home for a couple of days.
7. Undertake energy efficiency improvements to your home - or encourage your landlord to do so.
8. Keep a list of useful and emergency contacts by your phone – also add local organisations and charities who support older people. A list of useful contacts is available on the HertsHelp website.
9. Look out for friends and neighbours, particularly the elderly, those with existing health conditions and young children.
10. Keep tissues with you and use them to catch coughs or sneezes - then bin them and kill the germs by washing your hands.

If you are struggling to stay warm in your home this winter, or are worried about a friend, neighbour or relative who might be at risk, HertsHelp can help you find out about support that may be available. Call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044 or email info@hertshelp.net

It's important to go to the right place for help. Visit your local pharmacy for advice on how to treat many common health conditions. Most pharmacies have a private consultation room where you can talk in confidence. Minor injuries units and urgent care centres treat a range of injuries like sprains, cuts, bites, minor burns or scalds. For an illness that just won't go away, visit or phone your GP or practice nurse, or call the NHS on 111 for advice. A&E is for life-threatening situations such as heart attack or stroke and for people with symptoms of serious illness or who are badly injured. In an emergency, always dial 999.

General advice on staying well this winter is available at www.nhs.uk/staywell.

More information and advice on winter health can be found at www.hertsdirect.org/winterhealth