

Winter temperatures can be deceiving. Thermometers measure only the cold. Don't forget that the effects on your body are compounded by the wind. The combined effect of winter cold and wind speed is called *wind chill*.

The dangerous effects of wind chill rise as the temperature drops and the wind increases. Heat is carried away faster from the skin, driving down body temperature. This can lead to frostbite or hypothermia.

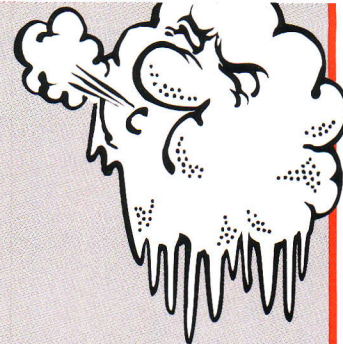
Hypothermia –

Low Body Temperature

Warning signs – Uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion.

Detection – Take the person's body temperature. If it is below 95°F (35°C), *immediately seek medical care.*

Sources: American Red Cross; National Weather Service



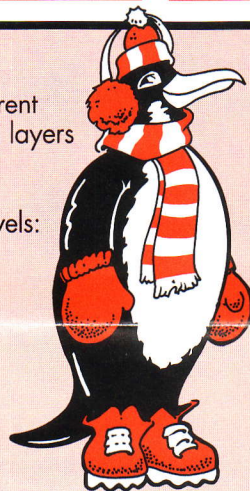
To avoid a chill, try to stay warm and dry. Layering clothes helps prepare you for different conditions and activities. Use three essential layers – *underwear, insulation* and *outer shell* – in different combinations to maintain comfort through changes in weather and exertion levels:

Underwear –

- Provides basic insulation and moves moisture away from skin, preventing chill when activity stops.
- Choose long underwear, or thin, snug-fitting pants with a long-sleeved T-shirt or turtleneck.

Insulation –

- Use one or more layers, depending on conditions.



- Sweaters, sweatshirts and other similar garments are good insulators. Some newer insulating pieces are also suitable as an outer shell in milder weather.

Outer Shell –

- Choose garments that are windproof, and preferably waterproof, such as those made of coated nylon or polyester. Many shells – such as ski-style jackets or parkas – combine the outer and insulating layers.
- Good fit is crucial. If the shell is too big, heat loss can occur rapidly. If it is too small, you may not have enough room for insulating layers.

Plan from head to toe. Wear a hat, which can save half your body heat loss. If needed, wear layers of pants to keep your legs warm. Gloves and warm socks help protect fingers and toes, where you can first feel the effects of cold temperatures.

Source: Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI)

Treading a slick sidewalk or moving your car from a slippery driveway can be dangerous. Accidental deaths occur most frequently in January, when an estimated 1,000 people die from falls outside the house.

To increase safety of family, friends and neighbors, keep your walkways and driveway free from snow and ice. Snow blowers and ice-melting granules make the process much easier and less physically demanding.

When the weather turns nasty –

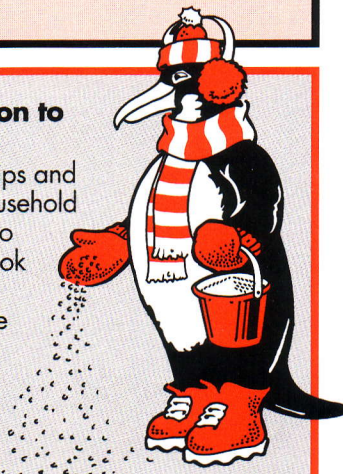
- **Act early.** It's easier to remove snow immediately following a snowfall, before it becomes packed or turns to ice. You can help prevent ice from forming by spreading ice melters when heavy wet snow, sleet or freezing rain begins. Reapply later, after removing any accumulation.

Remove ice and provide traction to keep walkways safe.

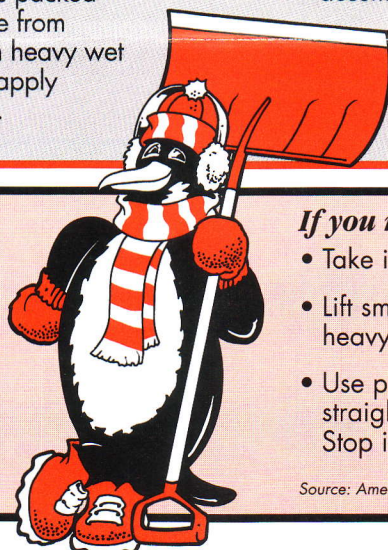
Many ice melters can help reduce the risk of slips and falls, and are more effective than household items like sand or kitty litter. Be sure to check the package labels. Always look for products that do *not* irritate skin, require special handling or protective clothing, or contain harsh chemicals. Follow directions carefully.

- **Clear a wide path.** When snow accumulates, take extra time to clear more than just a single shovel width on sidewalks. It will make walking easier and safer.

Sources: National Safety Council statistic; Koos, Inc.



Shoveling demands heavy physical exertion. The strain from the cold and hard labor may cause a heart attack. Sweating from overexertion can lead to a chill and hypothermia. Seek alternatives to shoveling. Use a snow blower and ice-melting products to help make snow removal easier. Get help from others.



If you must shovel, remember to –

- Take it slow; do it carefully.
- Lift small amounts, especially when removing heavy snow, slush or ice.
- Use proper posture to prevent back strain. Keep your back straight, and lift gently from the knees and hips. Stop if you feel pain or become short of breath.

Source: American Association of Orthopedic Medicine

SAFE STEPS FOR WINTER WEATHER