



Prepare for Winter



WINTER TIPS TO STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY

DECEMBER 2021

Dress Warmly

Wear dry, loose-fitting layers that hold body heat. Cover exposed skin, like your face and hands.

Prevent Falls

Watch out for slips on ice and snow by wearing sturdy shoes, walking at a slow pace, and keeping your hands free.

Winterize Your Home

Install insulation, weather stripping, and storm windows.

Take Care Shoveling

If you have to shovel, take breaks often.

Be a Winter Buddy

Check on family, friends, and neighbors - especially older adults - to make sure they have heat and are safe inside.

Don't Forget Sunscreen

The sun can cause sunburn even in the winter, especially when it is reflected off the snow. Cover exposed skin with sunscreen.

IS IT A COLD OR FLU?

SIGN AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

COLDS & FLU:

- Cold weather does not cause colds or flu! However, the viruses that do cause them, tend to be *more common in the winter months* (January - March).
- Frequent **hand washing, covering the mouth when coughing, and nose when sneezing** can help prevent the spread of germs.
- It's recommended that children ages 6+ months should be **vaccinated**.

COVID-19:

- COVID-19 vaccines are proven to be safe and effective.
- Everyone ages 5+ years are eligible to get a free COVID-19 vaccination.
- Learn about the different vaccines available by searching [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your zip code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find COVID-19 vaccine location near you.

STAY INFORMED!

Power

Identify items in your home that rely on power, like appliances, equipment, and medical devices.

Have batteries, charging stations, and alternate power supplies, such as generators, ready to use for these items.

Hurricanes and Winter Storms

Both coastal areas and inland areas can be affected by widespread damage caused from high winds, heavy rain or snow, or flooding caused by hurricanes and storms.

Have **plans in place** to shelter in your home or evacuate if needed.

Emergency Alerts

The **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)** program enables cell phones to receive alerts, based on the region you are in at the time. Alerts are for severe weather emergencies, imminent threats to life or property, AMBER alerts, and Presidential alerts. It is part of the government public safety system. For more information, go to <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea>.

Prepare for emergencies by:

- Making an Emergency Kit
- Planning for Sheltering in Home or Evacuation
- Staying Informed

For more information, go to <http://www.riema.ri.gov/resources>.

Fire Prevention

Make sure you have **smoke alarms** and installed correctly on every floor of your home.

Carbon Monoxide detectors should be placed outside bedrooms.

Space heaters should be placed at least **3 feet away from anything that could burn**, especially bedding. Turn off space heaters when leaving your house, when leaving the room, and while sleeping!

Kids

Ready Kids is a website that offers games, a resource library, and information to help kids before, during and after disasters.

Check it out at <https://www.ready.gov/kids>

Pets

- During severe storms it may be best to **take shelter** in a basement or small interior room like a bathroom. Make sure pets are acquainted and comfortable in that area of your house and will go there with you easily, if necessary. Make sure the shelter inside your home is free of dangers like pest poisons.
- Many pets have storm or firework anxiety and may be **prescribed medications** to help them cope. Give pets a dose of the medication prior to a storm to see how he or she will react - pets should always get trial runs of medication during periods when the veterinarian is available in case questions arise.
- **Be sure to include pets** in your preparedness kits and evacuation plan.