

Getting ready for winter



AGE concern
Slough & Berkshire East
improving lives locally



We know that winter can be a difficult time for older people. Snow, frost, cold temperatures and ice makes life harder in terms of getting on with daily tasks.



But with some simple preparation, winter need not be so hard and this guide aims to provide helpful hints and tips to staying healthy and warm throughout the colder months.

If you need help or are worried about preparing for winter, ask a family member, friend, neighbour or us. You can call Age Concern Slough & Berkshire East on : 01753 822890 or email us @ info@ageconcernsabe.org.uk

Helpful telephone numbers :-

Winter Fuel Payment Centre - 0345 915 1515

Warm Home Discount Scheme – 0345 603 9439



Keep warm

One of the best ways of staying well during winter is to keep your home warm. Your main living room should be around 18 - 21°C (64 - 70°F) and the rest of the house at a minimum of 16°C (61°F).

Wrap up warm, inside and out. Several thin layers clothes are better than one thick layer. Thin layers trap air, which helps keep you warm. Wear a hat, gloves and a scarf and / or thermal clothing!

Draw curtains over windows at night to provide insulation. Avoid covering radiators, as this will funnel heat out of the room.

Use a hot water bottle or an electric blanket (not both at the same time!) to keep warm whilst in bed.

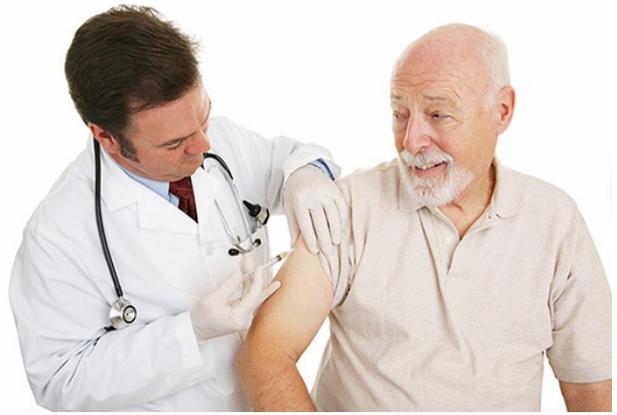


Stay healthy

Keep basic food items in stock for when it's too cold to go out. Tinned soup, beans, long-life milk, pasta and rice are all good cupboard staples. Try and include a good range of foods and aim for 5 portions of fruit and vegetables each day, so you're getting plenty of nutrients and vitamins. Frozen vegetables are as good as fresh.

Soups, stews and curries are ideal during cold weather.

Have a hot drink before bed to warm you from the inside!



Keep well

Have a flu jab. Ask your pharmacist or GP – if you're over 65 these are available for free.

The pneumo (or pneumococcal) jab is a one-off vaccination that helps protect you against pneumonia, meningitis and septicaemia. Ask your GP if you haven't had one – available free if you are over 65.

Keep a well stocked medicine cabinet and have a range of medicines at home such as paracetamol, ibuprofen, cough medicine etc.

Protect yourself against chilblains. Chilblains are itchy red swellings that occur when the skin is cold and you try to warm up to quickly. To prevent them, keep your whole body warm and don't sit to near a fire or radiator.



Stay active

Move around your home at least once an hour. Don't sit for long periods of time. Even light exercise helps keep you warm. Chair-based exercises and simply moving your arms, legs and wiggling your toes is helpful if walking is difficult.

Get outside if it isn't icy or too cold. It can boost your mood to get outdoors while it's still daylight. Lack of sunshine in winter can mean you don't get enough vitamin D. The main source of vitamin D is sunlight, but you can also get from foods such as oily fish, eggs, red meat and dairy products.

Keep happy – it's not unusual to feel a bit down in the winter especially with the darker shorter days. If you can't visit family or friends, phone instead for a chat to prevent isolation and loneliness.