

# Keep warm and well this winter

It's important to look after yourself, especially during the winter. Cold weather can be seriously bad for your health.

This information outlines some practical advice on staying well this winter – as well as tips on driving when the temperature falls.

If you do fall ill, visit your local pharmacy or GP to ensure you're treated promptly and efficiently. For more advice, visit [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell)

## Staying warm inside

There are simple measures you can take to prevent you, your child or older relatives getting hypothermia, which is when a person's body temperature drops below 35°C (95°F). Normal body temperature is around 37°C (98.6°F).



A healthy diet with plenty of fluids, warm drinks and regular meals can help provide energy so your body can generate heat. Avoiding alcohol, caffeine and smoking can also help as they all increase the rate at which the body loses heat.

In terms of helping others, keep an eye on any elderly or ill neighbours and relatives to ensure that they are keeping their house warm during cold weather. The government offers a **winter fuel allowance** for older people living alone.

If you have a baby, put a room thermometer in the room where they sleep in order to monitor the temperature. Keep it at 16-20°C (60.8-68°F).

## Staying warm outside

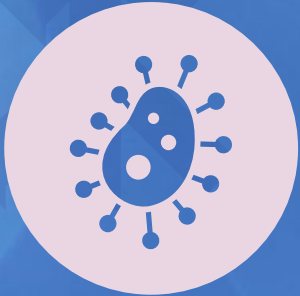
Make sure you are prepared for cold weather by checking the forecast and weather warnings on the **Met Office** website.

Multiple thin layers of clothing trap air, keeping you warm more effectively than one thick layer. It helps to keep active when it's cold. Waterproof and windproof clothing gives the best protection.



# Stopping the spread of infection

Effective hand hygiene is the single most important thing you can do to help reduce the spread of infections and protect you, your family and those around you.



There are some simple precautions which can be taken to prevent healthy people catching germs. They include:

- When coughing or sneezing, use tissues which should be disposed of immediately;
- If no tissues are available, cough or sneeze into your sleeve not your hands;
- If possible, avoid contact with people who are sick;
- Clean and frequently disinfect hard surfaces at home or work, especially when someone is ill;
- Keep your vaccinations up-to-date and get your flu jab every year;
- Strengthen your immune system – get plenty of sleep, keep physically active, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food;

## Is your vehicle ready for winter?

Weather can be unpredictable and severe weather can arise when least expected. Driving can become hazardous in and it is therefore important to be prepared and to be aware of how to drive in different circumstances.

Here are some tips for drivers to take into consideration before you set out:

- Always check the weather forecast in anticipation of your journey.
- Prepare an emergency kit for your vehicle. This should include: a torch and spare batteries, warm clothes and blankets, first-aid kit, jump start leads, road atlas, mobile phone and car charger, sunglasses and shovel

There are some other safety checks that can help prepare your vehicle:

- Check oil, anti-freeze screen wash and brake fluid levels and that tyres have sufficient tread e.g. more than 2mm;
- Wiper blades should be in good condition and do not leave streaks / smears on your windscreen;
- Batteries may require additional charging in winter. Ensure that all electrical features in your car are switched off until the engine is running;

For more information, visit:

[www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk) and [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

