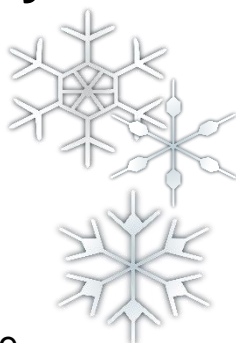


## Winter Walking Safety for Seniors

Walking is a great activity to keep you moving! Walking can help reduce your chances of falling by improving your strength, balance, and posture.



During the winter months, people are more likely to slip, trip, or fall with slippery streets and walkways. We see more people injured with sprains and broken bones during this time.

Some reasons for injuries:

- Wearing the wrong kind of footwear
- Not using walking aids such as a cane or walker
- Having unsteady balance
- Being distracted by what is going on around them
- How cold it is outside
- How much snow there is
- Icy walkways and streets

A good way to stay active and safe is to walk indoors when possible. Local malls, arenas, and apartment buildings are great places to get your walk in and stay safe.

### Before walking outside

Check the weather. Plan your walk for the weather.

Let your family or friends know where you are walking and how long you expect to be gone.

Plan your clothing for the weather.

- Dress in layers so you are ready for changing weather. The best way to stay warm is to wear a hat, scarf, and gloves.
- Wear bright colors or reflectors so motorists can see you.
- Consider wearing hip protectors. They can help protect you from breaking a hip should you fall.
- Wear shoes or boots that are warm, well insulated, and lightweight with non-slip sole. If it is icy, consider attaching ice grippers to your shoes or boots.

Consider using walking poles, cane, or walker.

## During your walk

Keep your hands out of your pockets to help you stay balanced.

Take extra care when using stairs.

Use the handrails when available for added support.

Be aware of your surroundings.

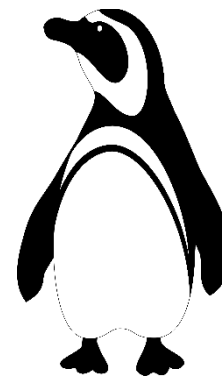
- Scan for hazards. You cannot always see black ice until you are stepping on it.
- Watch for slippery surfaces like ice, wet leaves, wet moss, and uneven surfaces.
- Try to walk only where the area has been cleared of snow.

If you find yourself on ice:

- Move slowly.
- Shorten your steps.
- Shuffle your feet.
- Hold onto someone's arm.

## Walk like a penguin

- Lean forward slightly.
- Turn your feet out slightly.
- Keep your center of gravity over your feet as much as possible.
- Keep your knees loose by keeping them bent a little.
- Keep your arms at your sides or slightly out from your sides.
- Take shorter steps.
- Shuffle your feet instead of lifting them off the surface.
- Concentrate on keeping your balance.
- Watch where you are stepping.
- Go **slowly!**



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## Get help and support

- Connect to **Social Prescribing and Supports for Frail Seniors.**

This is a community network of volunteers who offer services like home visits, walking partners, or snow clearing.

Abbotsford 604-743-0393

Chilliwack and Rural Communities 778-539-5435

Maple Ridge 604-768-8370  
Pitt Meadows

Surrey 604-531-9400  
White Rock ext. 204

- Visit [fraserhealth.ca](http://fraserhealth.ca) to learn more about how to prevent falls in seniors.

Search "[Your Healthy Winter Guide](#)". Check these topics online.

- [Exercise to prevent falls](#)
- [Preventing Falls](#)
- [Falls Prevention Mobile Clinic](#)
- [Preventing Falls: Strength and Balance](#)