

Winter well-being for older people in Wiltshire



Wiltshire County Council's Department of Community Services supports adults to be as independent as possible and remain in their own homes for as long as possible. Sometimes knowing the right place to find the help you need can make all the difference.

Top Tips for Winter

- Eat for Warmth
- Keep Moving
- Dress for Warmth
- Keep Your Home at 21°C
- Keep Warm at Night
- Insulate Your Home
- Get a Flu Jab
- Claim Your Rightful Benefits
- Apply for Grants

Staying Warm, Healthy and Active

It seems obvious that you should want to keep warm in the winter but many people don't realise the serious threat to health posed by not keeping warm. As weather gets colder we are all more susceptible to colds and 'flu and a drop in body temperature can increase the risk of heart attack, stroke and breathing difficulties. Older people are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. Place thermometers in the living room and bedroom, and keep temperatures at 21°C (70°F). Remember room thermometers are available free from Age Concern.

There are some simple things that you can do to keep warm and keep well such as eating well, drinking hot drinks, dressing warmly and exercising regularly

Keep Active

Any activity, even vacuuming, will improve circulation. Contact your local leisure centre to see what clubs and classes they offer for older people. Why not try Tai Chi to improve your balance, or swim at a Mature Bathers session?



Dress Warmly

Wrap up warmly, indoors and out, ideally with several layers of thin clothing to trap the heat. Wearing the warm clothing to bed is as important as wrapping up outdoors. Wearing sturdy slippers not only keep your feet warm but can also help prevent falls.



Flu Jab

It is also important to have a flu jab annually as the vaccination is modified slightly every year due to the flu virus changing. The flu jab is available free to anyone over 65 and people who are in 'at risk' groups. Ask your GP for details.

Eating Well in Winter

Winter is also a time when colds and flu to take over, with people sneezing and coughing everywhere you go. Avoid the winter blues



by taking care to maintain a

diet.

Stay strong and healthy during the cold season with these six simple meal tips.

1. Eat your fruit and vegetables. Beta-carotene, an antioxidant found in yellow and orange produce like winter squash, carrots and mangoes helps your body repel infection-causing germs.
2. If you can include a daily dose of raw garlic in your diet you can boost immunity. Try crushing or chopping it and add it to salad dressing. If you find the taste too strong, keep in mind that cooked garlic has benefits, so add a few cloves to your casserole or stew too.
3. Eat 'live' yogurt to get a daily dose of good bacteria that guard against gastrointestinal infections.
4. If a cold or flu does get past your immune system, enjoy a delicious steaming bowl of homemade or tinned chicken soup.



5. Drink plenty of hot drinks; why not try different types of teas, hot chocolate, or honey and lemon?
6. Stock up on tinned and frozen food so that if it's cold or icy outside you can stay indoors and needn't risk a trip to the shops.

Keeping your Home Warm and Draft Free

Keeping your home warm should become a top priority in the winter months. There are some small steps you can take to make sure your home is as warm as it can be such as draught proofing windows and doors and getting your heating system checked annually to make sure it is working properly. Double Glazing, loft and cavity wall insulation are all good means of trapping warmth in the home. You could also hang a thick curtain on front and back doors and use draught-proofing strips to trap the heat.

Wiltshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre

(0800 512012) provides free, impartial, expert advice to everyone to help cut the amount of

energy used at home. The EEAC works closely with local authorities and energy suppliers so they can tell you about any grants or offers that might be available.

Home Improvement Agencies (HIA)

are not-for-profit organisations that can help you repair, improve, maintain or adapt your home.

Ridgeway Care and Repair and **Anchor Staying Put** operate in Wiltshire. Find details of your local HIA at the back of this booklet. If you live in South Wiltshire then the **Age Concern** handyperson can help you.

Heat your Home Safely

Many Fire & Rescue Services offer a free home fire safety visit to people living within their fire station boundaries. This initiative has been highly successful in reducing accidental fires and deaths in the home. The home fire safety visits are carried out by operational crews, they are completely free and you may be eligible for a free smoke alarm. You will not be sold anything.



Making your Money go Further

With the cost of food and fuel rising, everyone is talking about ‘the credit crisis’ at the moment. Money troubles and debts can be especially worrying when you are no longer earning, or are caring for someone else.

Seek Help and Advice

Make sure you talk to someone about your money worries it as soon as you can. For debt problems seek advice from your local **Citizen’s Advice Bureau** or **credit union** (listed in your telephone book).



Free Insulation

If you are over 70 you are eligible for free loft and/or cavity wall insulation, call the **Wiltshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre** (EEAC) on freephone 0800 512012 to speak to an energy advisor.

Winter Fuel Payments

Most people over 60 can claim the Winter Fuel Payment, so if you’ve not received it before, you may need to claim. For more information call the **Winter Fuel Payments Helpline** 08459 15 15 15.

Apply for Grants and Programmes

There are many free products and services designed for older people. **Age Concern** can help you find the best deals and offers from the major energy suppliers.

Your right to Benefits

There are many other benefits and grants which you may be entitled to. Don't suffer in silence! Contact the **Social Care Help Desk** to arrange a benefits check today. The Pension Service can also advise you about pensions and pensioner benefits.

Steady on your Feet

Accidental falls cause hundreds of thousands of serious accidents in the United Kingdom every year and can be fatal. A fall can greatly reduce an elderly person's confidence and result in less independence and mobility. But there are a number of simple and practical things that older people can do to reduce risk. Relatives, friends, neighbours and carers of older people can help too, by looking out for the risk factors and helping older people help themselves.

Identifying risk factors – do you:

- Get light-headed or dizzy when standing or turning?
- Take more than four dosages of medicine daily?
- Have difficulty walking or rising from a chair?
- Have a poorly-lit home?
- Have you or a member of your family fallen or tripped more than once in the last year?

Practical ways to reduce the risk of having a fall

- Keep active; walking improves balance and strength and may prevent falls.

- Wear shoes with high sides, thin soles and good grips.
- Make your home safe; install grab rails on stairways and remove clutter.
- Have your eyesight checked regularly.
- Some medicines can make you have more than four prescriptions, ask your GP or pharmacist to review your medicines.
- Basic yoga or Tai Chi can help improve balance and reduce the likelihood of falls. Why not join a class at your local leisure centre or Age Concern and meet new people too?



A word from your pharmacist

It is time for the annual clear-out of your medicines cabinet! It's amazing how things just build up in there.

Don't hoard medicines "just in case" – any bottles of liquid medicine or tubes of cream should be removed within 6 months of opening them. Any

eye drops or ear drops only keep for a month when they have been opened! All tablets and powders will have an expiry date on the packet (it may be embossed onto the end flap and difficult to see) Don't keep your medicines past this date. Don't hold on to any prescription medicines that you no longer use.

Take everything you have removed from the cupboard back to the pharmacy, who will ensure that they are safely destroyed. (Don't just put them in the bin or flush down the toilet).

Do keep some essentials in the cabinet, so that you don't have to go out if you are feeling ill. These will usually include Paracetamol (for pain or fever) and Loperamide (for diarrhoea). Ask your pharmacist for advice about what you should keep. Remember anyone with high blood pressure or diabetes shouldn't use decongestants.

If you are on regular prescribed medicines, consider asking your pharmacist for a 'medicines use review' and take everything in your cabinet with you to the appointment for a useful chat.

Useful contact details

Social Care Help Desk 01225 713001 or email us at: socialcarehelpdesk@wiltshire.gov.uk

NHS Direct 0845 46 47

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

24 hour health advice and information service.

SeniorLine 0808 800 6565

www.helptheaged.org.uk

The Help the Aged free welfare rights service for older people, their relatives, carers and friends.

The Pensions Service 0845 30 13 011

www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

Impartial UK government information on state and private pensions Monday to Friday 8.00am to 8.00pm

British Gas 'here to HELP' 0800 952 0600

www.britishgas.co.uk/energy-efficiency/products/home-insulation/help-on-benefits.html

Find out if you are eligible for FREE insulation for your home.

Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) 0800 512012

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Provides free, impartial, expert advice to help cut the amount of energy used at home.

Winter Fuel Payments Helpline 0845 915 1515

www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel

For more information on winter fuel payments.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Chippenham 0845 120 3707

Devizes 01380 728771

Salisbury 01722 327222 and Appointments Line 01722 413482

Trowbridge 0844 499 4106

Age Concern Wiltshire 01380 727767

Age Concern Salisbury District 01722 335425

www.ageconcern.org.uk

Homeheat Helpline 0800 33 66 99

www.homeheathelpline.uk

A non profit organisation that can help with payments of bills

Energywatch Priority Scheme 0845 688 9594
[www.energywatch.org.uk/help_and_advice/
free_services/index.asp](http://www.energywatch.org.uk/help_and_advice/free_services/index.asp)

Provide you with free, independent help and advice on all gas and electricity matters. Can also take up complaints on your behalf, if you have not been able to resolve them directly with your energy supplier.

Anchor Staying Put (Salisbury district only)
1st Floor, 35 Catherine St, Salisbury, SP1 2DQ
stayingput.salisbury@anchor.org.uk
01722 333391
www.stayingput.org.uk

Ridgeway Care and Repair (All Wilts except Salisbury district) 01380 735437
www.ridgewaycommunity.org.uk

What Next?

Next year the new 'Wiltshire Council' will publish a comprehensive guide for older people in the county called 'Positive Ageing in Wiltshire'.

For further copies of this publication contact:

Social Care Help Desk

Department of Community Services,

County Hall, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LE

By telephone: 01225 713001

By textphone: 01225 712501

By fax: 01225 713355

By email: socialcarehelpdesk@wiltshire.gov.uk

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من الممكن توفير هذه المعلومات في صيغ ولغات أخرى عند الطلب. يُرجى الاتصال بفريق رعاية الزبائن على الرقم (01225) 713000 أو إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى: customer care@wiltshire.gov.uk

এই তথ্যটুকু অনুরোধক্রমে বোঝার ও পড়ার উপযুক্ত অন্য কোনো নমুনায় (ফর্মেটে) এবং ভাষায় দেওয়া যাবে, অনুগ্রহ করে কাস্টমার কেয়ার টিমকে ফোন করুন। ফোন: (01225) 713000 ইমেইল: customer care@wiltshire.gov.uk

我們可以根據您的要求使用其他形式和語言向您提供該資訊，請與顧客關懷團隊 (Customer Care Team) 聯繫，電話：(01225) 713000，電郵： customer care@wiltshire.gov.uk

Na życzenie informacja ta może zostać udostępniona w innych formatach i wersjach językowych, prosimy skontaktować się z zespołem ds. obsługi klienta, tel. (01225) 713000, Email: customer care@wiltshire.gov.uk