Phone call charges

This booklet gives contact numbers for a number of different organisations.

If calling from a BT landline:

- all 0800 and 0808 numbers are free
- all 0845 numbers cost a maximum of 5 pence per minute
- all calls to 0870 numbers cost a maximum of 7.5 pence per minute

Calls from mobiles and other networks may vary. Your service provider may charge a minimum cost per call.

Keep Warm Keep Well is a national campaign to reduce cold-related illnesses and deaths during winter. It is a partnership between the Department of Health, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.
Why keeping warm matters

We are all more likely to catch cold or flu in winter. The cold weather can also cause other serious health problems – like heart attacks, stroke and pneumonia. This means it’s essential to keep warm in winter.

What’s in this booklet

This booklet has advice on how to stay warm and well this winter. It looks at three areas: health, lifestyle and home heating.

Each section has information on how to prepare for winter, tips for what to do in cold weather and contact details for where you can get more help and advice.

There is also information about:

- help for people aged 60 or over – a £200 Winter Fuel Payment to help towards the cost of keeping your home warm (this is £300 for people aged 80 and over) (see page 26)

- government grants available for heating and insulation home improvements (see page 24 – Warm Front Scheme).
Looking out for neighbours

If you have an older person as a neighbour or a relative, please look out for them in the winter months and pass on the advice in this booklet. If curtains aren’t opened during the day, or there are no lights on in the evening, there may be something wrong. Try phoning or knocking on the door to see if there’s an answer. If not, contact a relative or friend who you think may have a key. If you think there are serious grounds for concern, contact the emergency services.
Top ten tips for keeping warm and well

1. Insulate your home
Fit draught proofing, insulate your walls and attic space. Grants are available from the Warm Front Scheme and your energy supplier – check whether you are eligible.

2. Update and improve your heating system
Grants are available from the Warm Front Scheme for installing efficient and modern forms of central heating. Again, check whether you are eligible.

3. Get financial support
The Pension Service, the Warm Front Scheme and the Home Heat Helpline offer advice to increase energy efficiency and reduce fuel bills. You should make sure you claim all the benefits you are entitled to.

4. Heat well
Try to keep a temperature of 21°C (70°F) in the main rooms you use during the day; your bedroom should be kept above 18 degrees. Use a hot water bottle or electric blanket (not both for safety reasons) if your bedroom is cold at night.

5. Dress well
Wear plenty of layers and put on a good coat, hat, scarf and gloves when you go outside to help you keep warm.
6. Eat well
Food is a vital source of warmth, so try to have regular hot meals and drinks throughout the day.

7. Keep moving
Moving around is good for your health and generates extra body heat, so any exercise or activity will help keep you warm. If possible, try and move around at least once an hour.

8. Stop smoking
Stopping smoking will boost your health for the winter, reduce your chances of a heart attack and improve your body’s circulation.

9. Get a flu jab
This is available free from your GP if you are 65 or over, or if you have a serious respiratory condition, heart, kidney or liver disease, diabetes or lowered immunity, or if you have had a stroke.

10. Stay safe, look out for neighbours
Get your heating system serviced and your chimney swept every year – be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning and protect yourself against them. If you have an older neighbour or relative, keep an eye out for them in the winter months and make sure they are safe and well.
Staying healthy

As well as increasing the chances of slips and falls, cold winter weather can cause problems by lowering your body temperature – which can increase the risk of heart attacks, strokes and breathing difficulties.

Preparation – stopping smoking

Whatever your age, stopping smoking will improve your health and make you more ready for winter. Within eight hours of stopping smoking, blood oxygen levels return to normal, and your chances of having a heart attack start to fall. Within two to twelve weeks of stopping, circulation improves throughout the body and walking and exercise get easier.

For confidential advice and details of local NHS Stop Smoking Services, call the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 0 169 or textphone 0800 169 0 171.
Preparation – have a free flu jab

As well as being an extremely unpleasant experience, flu can be a serious health hazard. You should talk to your GP about having a free flu jab if you:

- are aged 65 years or over
- have serious heart disease, serious renal disease, diabetes or serious respiratory disease (including asthma)
- have lowered immunity caused by a disease or medical treatment
- if you have had a stroke/TIA.

Your GP may also suggest you have a flu jab if you have serious liver disease or a serious neurological disease. When you see your GP, also ask whether you need the ‘pneumo jab’ to protect against serious forms of pneumococcal infection. It’s available to everyone aged 65 or over and for younger people with certain serious medical conditions.

Preparation – reduce the risk of catching colds and flu

Flu and colds are commonly spread by the airborne viruses expelled from the nose and mouth when people cough and sneeze. If you cough or sneeze into your hands, you are likely to spread germs to anything or anyone you touch. You can also pick up germs by touching infected surfaces.