

# Winter safety tips for older adults

One in three seniors fall each year. Slippery streets, icy walkways and heavy snow conditions are winter hazards that could contribute to a tragic fall event for healthy and active seniors. The good news is that most falls are predictable and preventable.

## Follow these tips to avoid falls this winter season:

- Wear boots or overshoes that have a deep tread and fit properly.
- Dress warmly so you are not tempted to rush.
- Keep all walkways and steps clear of snow and ice. Have an adequate supply of shovels available and consider asking someone else to help shovel, if needed.
- Watch out for ice - if you must walk on ice, slow down and take tiny steps.
- Carry a small packet of ice melters such as sand, grit, or cat litter in your purse or bag to spread on icy patches when walking.
- When using stairs, hold on to the handrail
- Make sure walkways are well lit at night.
- Wear sunglasses to reduce glare and be able to choose your next step safely.
- Carry parcels by your side so you can see where you will take your next step.
- On bad weather days, take a bus or taxi to and from a shopping trip - it could be less expensive than a fall. If your balance is not good, stay indoors on icy days.
- If you do need to go out, take a cane equipped with an ice pick.

## Healthy aging – it's your move!

Tips adapted from East York Falls Prevention Action Group.

Last revised: May 2014