

Home is Here...
Life Happens Here



Life is often about new beginnings with graduations, new jobs, relationships, marriages, children, grandchildren, etc. As we grow and learn, though, we also experience losses such as: relocating and saying goodbye to friends/co-workers, perhaps divorce, the empty nest and, at some point, the deaths of friends and loved ones.

Each of these experiences takes on different meanings to us as we move through the seasons of life. We move from a point in life of having many “firsts” to one where we are repeating major events but seeing and feeling them differently. However, each occurrence is still a “first” because it never happened exactly as before and probably not with the same people.

C.S. Lewis stated all of this much more eloquently in *The Weight of Glory* by writing, “There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations – these are mortal, and their life is to us as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit – immortal horrors or everlasting splendours.”

God gives us life and the opportunities to live it along with His other creations. It is often up to us whether we develop relationships that give us “immortal horrors or everlasting splendours.”

My hope and prayer is that we each savor this Christmas season. May we experience and share it with the wonder, love and grace with which it has been given to us.

Lynn Watkins
Executive Director



During the winter months, ice, snow and cold temperatures can make life challenging for everyone. Slippery sidewalks and cold weather can cause a wide range of injuries and illnesses -- especially for seniors.

Here is some helpful advice for preventing common winter dangers that the elderly faces.

1. **Avoid Slipping on Ice**

Icy, snowy roads and sidewalks make it easy to slip and fall. "Unfortunately, falls are a common occurrence for senior citizens, especially during the winter months," says Dr. Stanley Wang, a physician at [Stanford Hospital](#) in Palo Alto, Calif. Often these falls cause major injuries such as hip and wrist fractures, head trauma and major lacerations.

While younger people often recover relatively quickly from such injuries, older adults face complications, which Dr. Wang says are a leading cause of death from injury in men and women over the age of 65.

Make sure to wear shoes with good traction and non-skid soles, and stay inside until the roads are clear. Replace a worn cane tip to making walking easier. Take off shoes as soon as you return indoors because often snow and ice attach to the soles and, once melted, can lead to slippery conditions inside.

2. **Dress for Warmth**

Cold temperatures can lead to frostbite and hypothermia -- a condition where the body temperature dips too low. According to the

[CDC](#), more than half of hypothermia-related deaths were of people over the age of 65.

So don't let indoor temperatures go too low and dress in layers. Going outside? Wear warm socks, a heavy coat, a warm hat, gloves and a scarf. In very cold temperatures, cover all exposed skin. Use a scarf to cover your mouth and protect your lungs.

Your body temperature should never dip below 95 degrees -- if it does get medical assistance immediately.

3. **Fight Wintertime Depression**

Because it can be difficult and dangerous to get around, many seniors have less contact with others during cold months. This can breed feelings of loneliness and isolation.

To help avoid these issues, family members can check in on seniors as often as possible; even a short, daily phone call can make a big difference. Seniors can also arrange a check-in system with neighbors and friends, where each person looks in on one or two others daily.

4. **Eat a Varied Diet**

Because people spend more time indoors and may eat a smaller variety of foods, nutritional deficits -- especially Vitamin D deficiency -- can be a problem. [Nicole Morrissey](#), a registered dietician in southwest Michigan, recommends consuming foods that are fortified with Vitamin D, such as milk, grains and seafood options like tuna and salmon.