



December 2010

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Winter Safety Tips

- Mark Your Calendar!**
- December 1**
- Helping Hearts Support Group Holiday Gathering 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. FVH Room #1
 - "Home for the Holidays" Program 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Close to Home Must pre-register to 546-3401
- December 4**
- Auxiliary Goodie Sale 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. FVH Conference Center
- December 6**
- Diabetic Support Group Holiday Gathering 6 p.m. Optional Meter Check (\$6) 6:30 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres 7 p.m. "Destressing the Holidays" by Rachel Valentine, MA, LMHC FVH Conference Center
- December 7**
- Prime Time Coffee at 10 a.m. "Change the Way You Think to Change the Way You Feel" Adri Rutsch, MSW LISW Plains Area Mental Health Center Please register by calling 546-3410
 - Stroke Screening (\$40 each or \$95 for all three tests) Appointments necessary 546-3401
- December 11**
- Home Alone (\$10) 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- December 14**
- Healthcare CPR Renewal (\$32) 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- ** For more information or to register for the above classes, please call 712-546-3401.**

As the old Iowa story goes, if you don't like the weather - just wait five minutes! Unfortunately the changes this time of year include more clouds, wind, cold, ice and snow. Those adverse weather conditions lead to dangerous situations both outside and inside.

A few simple steps can help you and your family prepare for winter storms and extreme cold.

- 1) Get a Kit**
 - a) Make an emergency supply kit which includes items like non-perishable food, water, flashlights and batteries. A complete list is available under Emergency Preparedness on our hospital website.
 - b) For winter, be sure to add rock salt, sand, snow shovels, and plenty of warm clothing and blankets to your kit.
- 2) Make a Plan**
 - a) **Prepare Your Family**
Make a Family Emergency Plan. Disaster may strike when you are together as a family or when the family is in different locations. Make sure everyone knows how to contact each other in an emergency. Have an emergency contact outside your area, it is sometimes easier to get through if phone lines are down or lines are jammed with calls within your area. Plan on meeting locations to go in case of an emergency. Because all disaster situations are different, you should determine 2 locations, one within and one outside your neighborhood.
 - b) **Prepare Your Home**
Make sure your home is well insulated and that the furnace system is working properly. Insulate pipes and/or let water drip during extreme cold weather to avoid freezing. Know where your water shut off valves are in case a pipe bursts. Hire a contractor to check the structural stability of your roof confirming it will be able to sustain the extra weight from accumulating snow.
- 3) Be Informed**
 - a) Before hitting the road, check road conditions. Make sure your car has plenty of gas and all the major systems have been checked by a mechanic. Also carry an emergency kit in your car in case you are stranded.
 - b) Familiarize yourself with the terms that are used to identify winter weather.
 - c) Listen to local officials for information on travel advisories, business closings and disaster planning and execution.

These are just a few tips available to you as we head into December and the beginning of winter. There are a lot of very helpful websites you can use to help you and your family prepare. There is a link to many of them on our website at floydvalleyhospital.org.

Sources:
Ready America (ready.gov/america/beinformed/winter.html) and NOAA's National Weather Service (weather.gov/bm/winter)

Did you know....

- In injuries due to snow and ice, 70% are a result from a vehicle accident, about 25% occur in people caught out in a storm and most injuries occur to males over 40 years old.
- In injuries related to cold, 50% happen to people over 60 years old, more than 75% happen to males and about 20% occur in the home. A wind chill of -20°F can cause frostbite in just 30 minutes. Hypothermia is a condition where your core body temperature drops below 95°F. It can kill. For those that survive, there is like to be lasting kidney, liver and pancreas problems.
- The aftermath of a winter storm can have an impact on a community or region for days, weeks or even months. Being prepared is key to surviving this winter disaster.