

## TIPS

# Geriatric care in winter

While most of us go crazy over purchasing the right winter wear, and opt for the perfect skin care solution and planning activities for the holidays, senior citizens often get left out of the equation. When we talk about care for the elderly, the care comes in many forms, and not just health.

## THE RIGHT WINTER WEAR

We youngsters might be able to cope up with a little cold, but it is a whole different story for the elderly who can get cold very easily, especially if they are facing heart diseases. Keeping them warm at all times is necessary to keep them healthy. Head to toe winter wear is a must when leaving the home, and adequate warm clothes when inside the home is also a prerequisite.

## FOOTWEAR AT ALL TIMES

Not just when leaving the house, but even when the elderly are inside they should have their feet well insulated with furry slippers. Socks are good too, but this increases chances of slipping and falling, so provide sandals when walking. Warm feet means the whole body stays warm and healthy, so this keeps them warm in the coldest of temperatures.

## INSULATING THE HOME

Keeping windows closed to prevent cold winds, using heavy curtains to mask the drafts and a carpet to keep the floors warm are some of the necessities of an elderly's room. The bathroom should also be well equipped with water heaters and hair dryers to they do not have to stay with wet hair for long.

## ENCOURAGE ACTIVITY

Winter often makes us lazy, and that goes for the elderly as well. But for the aged, a sudden stop in all activities can be bad for their health. Yoga or easy to do exercises should be encouraged to keep them on

their feet and healthy, but prior advice should be taken from the physician.

## BALANCED DIETS

Senior citizens should follow a well charted balanced diet all year round, but in the colder months it becomes even more important to maintain one. The right portion of vitamins, fibre and fats can do wonders for their health and will keep their immune systems strong.

## DISEASES

Some particular diseases make it even harder for the elderly to stay warm. Some of these include diabetes, arthritis, thyroid problems, and many more. If your close ones suffer from any of these they should consult a physician and get instructions on the correct ways to stay healthy in winter. Arthritis, osteoporosis and other similar diseases seem to get worse with the cold and the pains usually become unbearable. Always have hot water bags available for it will help with the pain. If the pain occurs while outside, heat patches can also be a solution.

## HYPOTHERMIA

Luckily here in Bangladesh the temperatures do not always go very low, but it is always good to be cautious and to know the symptoms of hypothermia. A swollen face, cold hands and feet, pale skin, distorted speech, shallow breathing and a slower heartbeat are some of the signs of hypothermia setting in. If you do see any of these signs in any elderly, do not hesitate call a physician immediately.

Winter is a wonderful time here in the country, meaning everyone, including the elderly should enjoy it and its activities just as much. To keep them healthy and upright, all you need is a little care and attention.

By Anisha Hassan



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