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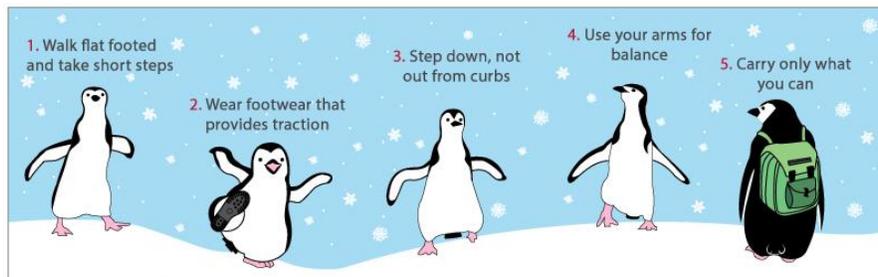
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Winter is here! Remember to Walk Like a Penguin

Prevent slips and falls this winter

Eau Claire, WI, February 2, 2017— The heart of winter has arrived! With the frigid temps and ice covering the ground, the Health Department wants to remind community members to keep themselves safe when enjoying the outdoors. Walking like a penguin may help prevent injuries related to slipping and falling during our Wisconsin winter weather.

Slips and trips are very common this time of year. Slips happen when there is not enough traction between the shoe and walking surface, such as the ground. Trips happen when a person's foot contacts an object in their way or drops to a lower level without warning, causing them to be thrown off-balance. Slips and trips can cause a fall easily. "Winter weather related falls can happen to anyone. Taking extra care and 'walking like a penguin' can prevent slips and trips" says KT Gallagher, Environmental Health Supervisor. Penguins walk flat footed, take short steps and use their arms for balance.



Falls are the leading cause of injury-related death in Wisconsin. In 2014, there were 2,179 Emergency Room (ER) visits due to fall related injuries; 906 of those visits occurred during what many consider "the winter months" of November-March. No matter our age, we are all at risk for falls and have more risk with ice and snow. 70% of ER visits for falls were for people under the age of 65. Most slips, trips and falls can be prevented with care and safety measures.

- Ways you can prevent winter falls:
 - Wear proper footwear, or snow cleats, for better traction on slippery surfaces. Change into dry dress shoes after you are inside.
 - Point your feet slightly outward, keeping your center of balance under you.
 - Take slow, small steps. Build in extra time when traveling.
 - Carry only what you need, and use a bag or pack instead of your arms.
 - Dress warm, but make sure that your sight and hearing is not blocked. Bright or reflective gear will help others see you.

Remember to walk like a penguin to prevent weather related falls so you can enjoy winter weather activities. For more information about winter fall prevention and other related safety tips please visit...

<https://www.cdc.gov/Features/WinterWeather/index.html>

<http://www.ehs.wisc.edu/walk-like-a-penguin.htm>

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