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5 steps to stay safe at winter

1. Protect yourself and your family against the flu

This year more than ever, is an important time to protect yourself and your family. The flu is very contagious, and can make some people seriously ill as they are at more risk of complications and can make existing health conditions worse.

The flu vaccination is free for those who are at a higher risk of the flu including the over 65s, and can help protect you and your family against the flu this winter. For further information contact your local GP or your local Pharmacist.

2. Keep Warm

Keeping warm helps to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

Keep Warm At home – keep the temperature at 18°C (65°F) or higher if you can. Keep your bedroom window closed on winter nights. Wear several layers of light clothes, they trap warm air better than one bulky layer and try not to sit still for more than an hour, try and keep active.

Keep Warm Outside – If feel well enough and it's not too cold, try and go for a short walk during the day. As well as wearing the winter essentials of a hat, gloves and a scarf (which should cover your nose and mouth), wearing several thin layers of clothing is better than wearing one big layer, as it traps the air and keeps you warmer.



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3. Stock up Medicines Cabinet

Many over-the-counter medicines (including paracetamol and ibuprofen) are available to relieve symptoms of common winter ailments such as colds, sinusitis or painful earache. For more information on what you need, visit our [medicine cabinet](#).

To manage winter illness symptoms at home, you should keep warm, rest, drink plenty of fluids, have at least one hot meal a day to keep your energy levels up and use over-the-counter medications to help give relief. Only take the recommended dose. Your local pharmacist can also give you further advice.

4. Make time to connect

It's not unusual to feel a bit down in winter – especially as the nights draw in. With restrictions in place, we may not be able to see our friends and family like we used to, but we can still keep in touch. Why not pick up the phone or go online and reconnect with your loved ones. The [Silver Line](#), [Age Cymru](#) and [Re-Engage](#) also offer a number of befriending and advice services. Remember it's good to talk!

5. If you are a Carer plan for the 'what if'...

As a carer you need to be prepared in case you become unwell or have an emergency. Who will be willing to cover you in an emergency? It's important that you have plans in place, so we know who will care for the person you look after. For more information on emergency care plans contact your local authority or Carers UK. Information for carers and looking after someone is also available at the NHS 111 Wales website.