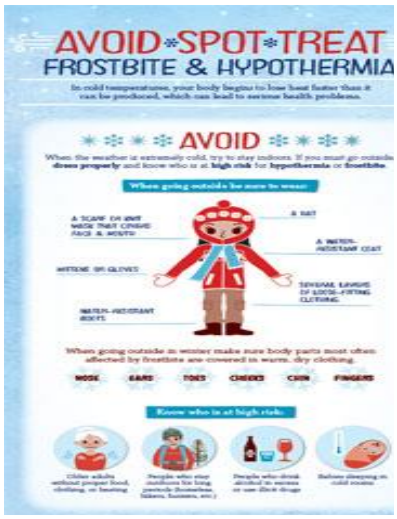
Reach-Up
Head Start
Early Head Start

The Whistler

January 2019



Winter Safety

According to data from the National Safety Council, 25,000 slip, trip and fall accidents occur daily in the US.

Snow, ice and freezing temps in the winter multiply the number of wet and slippery surfaces at work and the potential for accidents.

Ladders, scaffolding, machinery, utility poles, and even the entry and exits to a building can all be exponentially more dangerous in the winter months.

As an example, in the US in 2014, there were 42,480 workplace injuries and illnesses involving ice, sleet, or snow that required at least one day away from work to recuperate.

As one might expect, most snow and ice-related slips and falls occur on outdoor surfaces.

The majority happen in parking lots, roadways, driveways and walkways where individuals travel on foot between their worksites and vehicles.

About 8 percent do occur indoors; in entryways, hallways and other rooms where ice and snow have been tracked in from outside.

Practically all injuries from slips and falls on snow and ice fall under the classification of “traumatic injuries.” These injuries range from minor bruises, cuts and abrasions to serious bone fractures, spinal cord damage and concussions. Strains, sprains and tears comprise the largest category. The lower extremities are most often injured by these accidents, followed by multiple body part injuries, which are incidents with more than one traumatic injury to two or more unrelated parts of the body.

Icicles and chunks of ice and snow can be deadly falling objects and projectiles. Most ice falls within five to ten feet of a building but can travel 50-100 feet from taller structures, such as cell towers, overpasses, or high-rise buildings. When icicles and chunks of ice fall, they fall quickly. A half-pound icicle, three inches in diameter, can fall at a rate of 80-90 mph. It can hit you with 1,000 pounds of deadly force.

Black ice is one of the most feared hazards of winter. It is virtually impossible to see to those walking or driving on it. The accident rate on black ice can be up to five times higher than on dry surfaces and four times higher than on wet surfaces. Stopping distances for vehicles on ice is almost 10 times that of stopping distances for vehicles on a dry surface.