

Winter Safety Tips

Stay warm

Cold temperatures can lead to frostbite and hypothermia, which happen when your body temperature dips too low. Hypothermia occurs when your body temperature drops below 95 degrees. You don't even have to be outside to develop hypothermia. This deadly condition can occur right in your own home. Adults over sixty and children under five tend to lose body heat quickly. Hypothermia can set in gradually or very quickly, and you may be unaware that it is happening. It is especially dangerous because it affects your ability to think clearly—which makes you less likely to reach out for help.

Symptoms of hypothermia include excessive shivering, slurred speech, clumsiness, weak pulse, memory loss, dizziness, redness of the skin, and loss of consciousness. Hypothermia is a medical emergency and needs immediate medical attention.

To avoid hypothermia while in your home:

- Keep the thermostat always set to at least 68 degrees
- Dress in warm layers around the house
- Wear thick dry socks and slippers with non-slip soles

- Avoid alcoholic beverages because the alcohol can cause you to lose body heat

When heading outdoors, wear warm socks, dry footwear, a heavy coat over layered clothing, a warm hat, gloves, and a scarf. In very cold temperatures, you should cover all exposed skin. Use your scarf to cover your mouth and face and a hat to protect your head and ears.

Avoid slips and falls

It can be easy for anyone to slip and fall on icy, snowy sidewalks and roads. Falls can cause major injuries such as hip and wrist fractures, head trauma, and major cuts and bruises.

If you can, stay inside on snowy, icy days until the roads, steps, and walkways are clear and lightly salted. Avoid going out after dark because melted snow or ice can freeze again when the temperatures drop at night.

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The symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure include shortness of breath, nausea or dizziness, headaches, and a feeling of confusion. If you have these symptoms, immediately go outside into fresh air and call 911.

Make sure you have working flashlights, warm blankets, and, if available, a charged cell phone in case you lose power. Long power outages can spoil food in your refrigerator and freezer so keep a supply of non-perishable foods on hand that can be eaten without heating.

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Proper footwear reduces your risk of falling. Make sure your winter shoes fit well and have good traction and non-skid soles. If you use a cane or walker, replace any worn tips to give you better traction.

When you come indoors from wintry wet weather, remove shoes and boots at the door so you don't spread snow and ice around your home that can melt into slippery puddles.

Prepare for cold weather and power outages

Space heaters can help warm small rooms when paired with other types of home heat sources. These heaters should be located clear of clutter and not left unattended. Many fires have been caused by improper use of these heaters.

Using a fireplace, gas or kerosene heater, or lanterns can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning if not used correctly. Ensure your safety by following the manufacturer's directions for use.

Check the batteries on your carbon monoxide detector and make sure the unit isn't expired. Purchase an updated detector if needed or ask your landlord to replace expired units. Test your carbon monoxide detector once a month during the winter.

One of the most important tips when your power goes out is to call someone to let them know that you are without power and may need help.

Ask for help

During the cold months, ask for help when you need it. Whether you need someone to clear your steps and front walkway of snow and ice or pick up nourishing groceries or meals for you, don't hesitate to ask a family member, friend, neighbor, or hire a professional.



Save With Senior Discounts

National and local retailers across New York offer great discounts to seniors, so it always pays to check if you're eligible for some savings. Restaurants, grocery stores, retail, hotels, and more offer everything from a discount to free items. You may need to be a member of AARP or other organizations to take advantage. Discounts start as young as age 50–55 at some businesses,

but may not start until 65 for others, so double check the details. You can find a list of retailers who offer discounts at:

- theseniorlist.com/senior-discounts
- seniorliving.org/finance/senior-discounts
- iloveny.com/seniors/discounts/

Member Rights: Voluntary Disenrollment

Nascentia Health Options has a robust grievance process in place that is designed to investigate and resolve your concerns. That said, there may be issues that cannot be resolved to your satisfaction. You may also decide that our plan simply isn't a good fit for you. If you wish to disenroll from the plan, you may do so at any time and for any reason by providing oral or written notification to Nascentia Health Options (we will provide written confirmation upon receipt of an oral request).

Your Care Manager/Coordinator will begin coordinating services for your transition upon receipt of your notice, and your disenrollment will take effect no later than the first day of the second month following the month you submitted your request. Should you wish to initiate disenrollment, you will be asked to sign a voluntary disenrollment form. If you choose to disenroll to another MLTC plan, you must still qualify to maintain coverage in an MLTC. This includes the need for community based long-term care services for more than 120 days.

If you have any questions about the disenrollment process, please contact your Care Manager/Coordinator or Member Services at 1.888.477.HOME (4663).

Annual Reassessments are important

New York State requires Managed Long Term Care Plan members to complete an annual reassessment every 12 months to maintain eligibility. Delays may lead to service interruptions or disenrollment.

Nascentia Health works with partner agencies outside the 315-area code to schedule these assessments. To ensure timely completion, respond promptly and complete the reassessment within 30 days.

If you cannot attend the scheduled appointment, contact Nascentia Health or the partner agency immediately to reschedule. Completing the reassessment is crucial to continue receiving your services.

Our Hours

One of our friendly staff is here to help you at Nascentia's Member Services, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am–4:30 pm.

Just call us at 888-477-4663 (TTY: 711)

After regular business hours, you can still reach our on-call assistance at the same phone number.

New Providers

October–January



Please join us in welcoming the newest members of our provider network. A complete list of providers is available by calling (888) 477-4663 or by visiting nascentiahealthoptions.org/member-materials.

Provider	Service	Counties Served	Address/Phone
Advanced Orthotics and Prosthetics, LLC	Prosthetics and Orthotics	Albany	350 Northern Boulevard Suite 101 Albany, NY 12204 518-472-1023
Advanced Orthotics and Prosthetics, LLC	Prosthetics and Orthotics	Rensselaer	144 Eastern Boulevard Suite 2 Watertown, NY 13601 518-472-1023
Department of Medicine Medical Service Group at SUNY HSC at Syracuse, Inc.	Podiatry	Onondaga	750 East Adams Street Syracuse, NY 13210 315-464-5726
Effortlessly Healthy, LLC	Meals on Wheels	Monroe	1440 Scottsville Road Rochester, NY 14624 585-254-0078
Prime Riv, LLC dba Brooklyn Kitchen	Meals on Wheels	All 48 Counties	2780 Stillwell Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11224 718-371-0025

Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP)

Please note that the following information impacts members receiving Consumer Directed Personal Assistance, ONLY.

Starting January and going through March 28, 2025, all individuals, and personal assistants in CDPAP will need to change to the new Statewide Fiscal Intermediary, Public Partnerships Ltd. (PPL).

Note: Your plan of care, hours of service, and your right to choose your personal assistant are not affected by this change but you must take action to switch to PPL.

To avoid problems with your CDPAP services, you can take action to switch to PPL now by choosing one of the following options:

- **Option 1:** Call PPL's support center at 1-833-247-5346 or TTY: 1-833-204-9042. A team member will help you complete the process.
- **Option 2:** Change through PPL@Home by going to PPL's website at pplfirst.com/cdpap.
- **Option 3:** Work with an approved CDPAP facilitator who can guide you through the process. A list of approved CDPAP facilitators will be listed on PPL's website.

No matter which way you choose to change to PPL, they are here to help.

Where Can I find More Information?

PPL is hosting online and in-person information sessions to give you more information and answer your questions. Visit the PPL website at pplfirst.com/cdpap for event dates and information. The website also has several CDPAP resources that will be helpful to you when making this change to PPL.

You can email PPL at NYCDPAP@pplfirst.com or call the support center at 1-833-247-5346 or TTY: 1-833-204-9042 with any questions or needs.

Tips for Drinking More Fluids

It's so important for people of all ages to stay hydrated! Try these ideas to increase your intake of healthy beverages.



Add a little fresh or bottled lime/lemon juice or fresh fruit wedges to give water a refreshing twist.



Brew your favorite tea for a breakfast or after-dinner treat. Just stay away from adding sweeteners.



If you love bubbles in your drinks, skip the soda and get plain or sugar-free sparkling water.

Urinary Tract Infections

Causes, Risks, and Prevention

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are one of the top reasons that our members visit the emergency room and are hospitalized. Most UTIs are caused by an infection from bacteria that get into the urinary tract system.

UTIs can cause pain and difficulty with urination. You may feel pressure or aching in your bladder or lower pelvic area, or low back and side pain. It may hurt, sting, or burn when you urinate. Your urine may appear cloudy, have blood in it, or develop a foul or strong odor. You may feel like you need to urinate very frequently but only small amounts of urine come out at a time.

Certain risk factors may increase your likelihood of developing a UTI. If you have any of the risk factors listed below, tell your doctor about them and discuss your concerns.

UTI Risk Factors

- Being immobile or not moving much
- Neurological conditions that affect the bladder's nerve conduction, including diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and spinal cord injuries
- Using a catheter (a tube placed in the body that drains the urine from the bladder to a collection bag)
- Having a urine blockage, such as from a kidney stone, narrowed urethra, tumor, or enlarged prostate gland
- Bowel incontinence (the inability to control when you have a bowel movement)
- Not drinking enough liquids
- Men that are not circumcised
- Diabetes and other diseases that can impair the immune system—the body's defense against germs

To Prevent UTIs

- Drink plenty of fluids, as directed by your physician, especially water. This helps keep bladder tissue hydrated and healthy.
- Avoid holding your urine. Make sure you go to the bathroom when you feel the urge to go. Holding your urine can encourage bacterial growth. Don't wait more than 4 hours to go to the bathroom.
- Avoid taking baths. If possible, take showers instead of baths. Sitting in dirty tub water increases your risk of getting a UTI.
- Increase your intake of cranberries. Pure cranberry juice or fresh, frozen, or sugar-free dried cranberries are the best options. You can also take cranberry tablets. Scientists think that cranberries contain a substance that helps prevent bacteria from sticking to the bladder wall so that they are flushed out of your system when you urinate.
- Women should wipe from the front toward the back after using the bathroom to avoid spreading bacteria into their bladder.

If you think you have a UTI, it is important to see your doctor so they do a urine test and prescribe a treatment. Ignoring these symptoms could result in further complications, including hospitalization.



Eating cranberries can help prevent UTIs. Look for no or low-added sugar options.

A Happy Mouth is a Happy Body

Did you know your teeth and gums can affect your whole body? Your mouth is the doorway to your stomach and lungs. It's full of germs, and most of them are harmless. But if you don't keep your mouth clean, harmful germs can grow, get into your blood, and make you sick.

Here are some problems that can happen if you don't take care of your mouth:

Heart problems: Gum disease can make you 20% more likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

Heart infections: Germs can infect the inside of your heart.

Breathing problems: Germs from your mouth can get into your lungs and cause illnesses like pneumonia.

Joint pain: Germs can make arthritis worse.

Memory problems: Gum disease germs can travel to your brain and damage nerve cells, leading to Alzheimer's disease.

Bone loss: Gum disease can make you lose bone in your jaw and teeth.

Cancer: Gum disease can increase your risk of certain cancers, like mouth, lung, and stomach cancer.

Chronic diseases: Conditions like diabetes or HIV can make it harder to fight infections, and gum disease can make diabetes harder to control.



How to Keep Your Mouth Healthy

- Brush your teeth two times a day for two minutes each time. Use a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste. Brush your tongue, too!
- Clean between your teeth with floss or a water flosser every day.
- Use mouthwash to kill germs.
- Eat healthy foods and limit sweets and sugary drinks.
- Get a new toothbrush every 3–4 months or when the bristles look worn.
- Don't use tobacco products.

If You Don't Have Teeth

It's still important to keep your mouth clean! Germs can stick to your gums, tongue, and dentures, causing bad breath and gum disease. Here's what to do:

- Brush your gums, lips, tongue, and cheeks to remove germs.
- Clean your dentures every day.
- Use fluoride mouth rinses.
- Visit your dentist regularly to catch problems early.

See Your Dentist Every Year

Visit the dentist at least once a year for a checkup and cleaning. Keeping your mouth clean helps protect your body and keeps you feeling your best!



Nascentia Health OPTIONS

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nascentiahealthoptions.org

(888) 477-4663

Member Advisory Committee



Did you know that Nascentia Health Options has a Member Advisory Committee that meets twice a year? This committee gives our members a voice and an opportunity to meet with other MLTC members and leadership to discuss the current status of the health plan and share your thoughts about being a member of Nascentia. We are a strong, growing plan and your feedback is important to us!

The next Member Advisory Committee is Wednesday, March 26, from 3–4pm both in person and via phone. We hope you will join us!

If you or your family member or representative are interested in joining the Member Advisory Committee meeting, please contact June Misnik at (315) 477-9278 or jmisnik@nascentiahealth.org.