

MAPLEWOOD

Senior Living



TIPS FOR WINTER CAREGIVING

Snow, colder temperatures, and less light can lead to additional safety concerns and confusion for those living with Alzheimer's or a dementia-related disease. It is easy for caregivers to get overwhelmed because there are so many things to think about to be sure their loved one is safe. Here are some winter safety tips for caregivers to keep in mind.

WINTER WANDERING

Wandering in winter temperatures can be extremely dangerous—even life-threatening. For those suffering with dementia, wandering can be triggered by stress or fear. They may be searching for past friends or a bathroom. They may be following a past routine like going to work. Continual supervision is ideal. Have a bell on a door or childproof locks on doors. An easy solution is to “camouflage” doors with a curtain. Be sure they either wear a medical ID bracelet, GPS tracker, or even sew an ID into their clothing.

LIGHT FOR LONGER

Those who suffer from “sundowning” find the winter change in light affects their visual perception much more. Use light timers to make sure rooms are lit earlier to avoid late day shadows as they can increase disorientation and confusion.

WEATHER WATCH

Heed weather alerts. Be prepared and plan appointments and shopping trips around inclement weather. Make sure you have fuel or firewood to keep a home warm.

LAYER UP

A person living with Alzheimer's or dementia may forget to bundle up before going outside. Be sure you have them dressed warmly in layers that cover their head, hands, and any exposed skin.

WATCH YOUR STEP

Everything from steps to paths become slippery in cold weather. Slow things down for a person with Alzheimer's or dementia. Make sure they step carefully and move slower than normal.

KEEP MOVING

It is difficult to do an outdoor activity but you still need to include activities as part of your loved one's day. Use simple activities to promote movement – light housework, cooking, crafts, playing cards, and games, or even walking around the interior of the house.

ASK FOR HELP

Reach out to neighbors for help shoveling, or carrying groceries into your loved ones house. If there are any safety concerns in the house due to the weather, ask someone to stop by and check for you.

If you would like more information, please contact a Maplewood Senior Living community. Our knowledgeable staff of professionals understands and is here for you and your loved ones throughout the journey.

203.557.4777 | [MaplewoodSeniorLiving.com](https://www.maplewoodliving.com)

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