



# Genesee County Health Department

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**End Date:** February 16, 2015

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**RE:** Extremely Cold Temperatures Forecasted

Extremely cold temperatures are in the forecast for Genesee County this week. When temperatures drop below normal levels it is important to stay safe and warm. Clothing is the first line of defense against cold weather injury. Always dress in loose layers. The outermost layer should be water resistant to keep the rest of the layers dry. Wear a hat because up to half of your body heat can be lost through your head.

Breathing cold air can harm lung tissue and aggravate asthma, covering your mouth and nose with a scarf or face mask is helpful. Mittens that fit snugly around your wrists but loose around your fingers are the best form of hand protection. Water resistant footwear and warm socks are a must to protect toes from frostbite.

If you are shoveling snow, take frequent breaks and avoid exertion. Your body is already working harder to stay warm, and cold weather puts an extra strain on your heart. If you feel tightness in your chest stop immediately. If you have a history of heart trouble do not shovel unless you have permission from your doctor.

If you become trapped in a winter storm while driving, stay in your car. Many people suffer severe injuries and even death by leaving the shelter of the vehicle and then becoming disoriented in the blinding snow. Run your engine for a few minutes every hour to reheat the interior of your car, making sure that the exhaust pipe is not blocked. Tie a visible item such as a red handkerchief to your antenna, this will keep you visible to rescuers.

Stay informed, always pay attention to the local weather, news, and wind chill factor so you can plan ahead and stay safe.

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Better Life Through Better Health

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