


Preparation



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Introduction



Winter can be a beautiful time of year, especially come November and December. It is the holiday season! However, Winter can also be a time of great struggle and strife, especially for those who live in colder climates. Mix that with being disabled, and it can feel like a minefield. Thankfully there are ways to navigate and prepare for the season. I will show you that today!



The Challenges

Being disabled can offer many challenges during the wintertime! Just to name a few, here are some of the following examples:

- sleep issues (insomnia or hypersomnia)
- slipping on ice/trying to use mobility aids
- seasonal depression/changes in mood
- low energy and/or fatigue

- getting even colder more easily due to blood thinners
- stiff muscle joints/aching bones
- allergies can act up/aggravate (ex: itchy, dry eyes)
- symptoms worsen/become irritated
- getting dressed without overheating or getting too cold
- longer to get ready



Ways to Manage

Vitamins

Keep your vitamin capsule intake low. Make sure your vitamin intake is mainly in your food. Put those big bags of frozen vegetables from the store in your regular meals. Make sure you meal prep all your food as well. Take Vitamin D and B12 in the morning, and C and Magnesium at night.

Go Outside

I believe the kids call it “touching grass” nowadays. I know what you’re thinking. It is tempting to stay holed up in your house and hibernate for the winter but even sticking your head out the window for a few minutes can significantly improve your mood.

Exercises

Doing your sit-to-stand exercises with a ball between your legs like many of us learned in therapy is a great way to strengthen your inner and outer thighs as well as keep up with your hip flexibility and pelvic support. It’s very simple and you can do it at your desk.



 TikTok
@insidejourneys

Coping skills

Feel more in control of yourself, your circumstances, and surroundings by getting and staying engaged in activism in very small, manageable ways. For example, you can go to [ACLU.org](https://www.aclu.org) and sign all the petitions from the comfort of your home, without ever having to change out of your pajamas or slippers!



Safety Mechanisms

- Get an ice pick for the bottom of your cane so you can stick it in the snow, and it is safe to use in cold, snowy, and icy weather.
- Try to go out with other people when you can so they can keep an eye on you in case you need help. This doesn't mean you're not strong or independent, but it always helps to have someone else there in case you need it and to prevent emergencies.
- Make sure any ground you walk on is not icy or slippery or at least salted.

Precautions

- If you do fall, make sure you don't hit your head. Stick out a knee or fall on your butt if possible.
- If you do hit your head, assess your symptoms to see if you need to go to the hospital, depending on how hard you hit it. Message or call your primary care provider or neurologist if you are unsure.
- Have a loved one hold your hand or onto your gate belt for safety.

Physical

- 40oz of water daily
- 8-9 hour of sleep
- MOVE your BODY daily (40 mins or more)
- Morning and Night routine

Emotional

Engage in cozy hobbies like reading, knitting gaming, crafting, making jewelry, etc. Anything you can think of that does not involve going outdoors! You can even create an at home gym of your own.

Mental

- read a book / less screen time
- MOVE your BODY every day (40 mins or more)
- Morning and Night routine
- Clean room

Hygiene

Cold weather, seasonal illnesses, sensory changes, and limited daylight can all impact comfort and health. Remember to practice personal hygiene and always wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.

Health Tips



Conclusion

1

Remember that being disabled doesn't mean you can't enjoy the wintertime season. It just presents itself with new challenges that you have to be careful and mindful of.

2

Remember to keep your overall predictable routines. The holidays are a busy time that can be filled with fun and joy, but it is easy to forget about yourself in them.

3

Your routines will keep you grounded and at peace amidst the chaos. They will help your mood, sleeping schedule, and overall energy levels. Happy holidays to all of you!

Resources

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1miwI2HQYp2PBn2jezXlUqxsrcM5oYTIj/view?usp=sharing>
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZYmiq9AqvSllmbwk0hw5jCCYpwMf6DDm/view?usp=sharing>
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q3GY4tNq1_gb4pS2eOpB2LK_HRUUwtbY/view?usp=sharing
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1buo_a9X1Tz3jR-65npvq8tJEzA1Q_Dyg/view?usp=sharing
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Zfns_JAwbHIR9vNcLnjSvt5taDy-iB-F/view?usp=sharing
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sQZgAQ7Q-4BucfSxcCeYD6Ca3lv1pS-C/view?usp=sharing>
- <https://www.yourcsn.com/advice-and-tips/winter-wellness-tips-for-individuals-with-disabilities-and-their-care-teams/#:~:text=As%20temperatures%20drop%20and%20routines%20shift%2C%20winter%20can,can%20all%20impact%20comfort%2C%20health%2C%20and%20daily%20functioning.>
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1umB0-XxaqLPA-tJF3tJEASfbXrEjZemp/view?usp=sharing>
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fIkU4iLpjHVsN8X3Qsxc_youSFN4Xbav/view?usp=sharing

Thank You

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