

# Safe Walking in the Winter

Walking to and from parking lots or between buildings at work during the winter requires special attention to avoid slipping and falling on ice. With an increase in extreme winter weather events in the Northeast, slips and falls are some of the most frequent types of injuries reported. Ensure you are constantly aware of the potential dangers associated with snow and ice and learn how to walk safely on icy and slippery surfaces.

## Precautions to Take

- Wear shoes and boots with good traction; avoid shoes with smooth soles or heels.
- Wear a heavy, bulky coat that will cushion you if you should fall.
- Only carry what you need to free your hands in case of a fall and to promote balance.
- Keep your cell phone with you in case you need to call for help.

## Walking on Ice



Always assume that all wet and dark areas on pavement are slippery or icy. Penguins evolved to walk on icy surfaces, and we can emulate how they walk with the following tips:

- Bend slightly and walk flat-footed with your center of gravity directly over your feet as much as possible.
- Extend your arms out to your sides to maintain balance keeping your hands out of your pockets.
- Point your feet out slightly. Spreading your feet out slightly increases your center of gravity.
- Approach all surfaces with caution and walk/shuffle slowly. Be sure to watch where you are stepping.
- Be careful when entering or exiting a vehicle.
- Only walk in designated walkways; taking shortcuts can be hazardous.

## Falling on Ice



- Try to avoid landing on your knees, wrists or spine. Try to fall on a fleshy part of your body, such as your side.
- Try to relax your muscles if you fall and do not lock joints; you will injure yourself less if you are relaxed.