

SPRING 2025
EDITION

AGEING SAFELY... LATEST NEWS

*Ageing Safely in the home of YOUR Choice – Ideas and Tips to
maximize your Health and Wellness.*

WELCOME TO THE SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

This information bulletin provides tips to be
considered for a safe and healthy Spring.

Ageing Safely in the Home of YOUR Choice

Ideas and Tips to Customize your Home
into a Senior-Friendly Environment



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As the weather warms up and nature wakes from its slumber, spring offers seniors a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and engage with their communities. However, with the joy of the season also comes a need for safety precautions to ensure that all activities are enjoyable and risk-free. Here are some essential tips and ideas for seniors to stay safe during the spring season.

Stay Hydrated

With the transition from colder to warmer weather, staying hydrated is crucial. Dehydration can cause dizziness and increase the risk of falls, so drink plenty of water. Seniors may not feel thirsty but need to drink ample fluids to avoid dehydration. Aim for at least eight glasses of water a day and consider keeping a water bottle handy when outdoors. Certain fruits and vegetables can also contribute to your hydration.

- **Wear supportive shoes:** Choose shoes with good traction and support to prevent slips and falls.
- **Improve home safety:** Ensure adequate lighting, remove tripping hazards, and consider installing grab bars in areas like the bathroom and near stairs.
- **Be mindful of surroundings:** Pay attention to your steps, especially on uneven surfaces or in unfamiliar environments.

Disclaimer: The information highlighted in this document are suggestions.

Information is widely available on the web and provided as a reference and your awareness. Seniors' concerns and issues change over time.

Always verify for current and factual information on trusted websites.

- **Consider fall detection devices:** Eliminating or mitigating tripping hazards, highlighted in the book are critical. Various devices can alert caregivers or emergency services in the event of a fall.

Protect Yourself from Allergies

Spring allergy season can be challenging, particularly for seniors who might already have respiratory issues. Be mindful of pollen counts in your area and try to stay indoors during high pollen times, usually in the morning. Consult with your doctor about appropriate over-the-counter medications that can help alleviate allergy symptoms.

- **Monitor pollen levels:** Check daily pollen counts and consider staying indoors during peak times.
- **Keep windows closed:** Limit exposure to allergens by keeping windows closed, especially during high pollen counts.
- **Use air purifiers:** Air purifiers with HEPA filters can help remove allergens from indoor air.
- **Take allergy medication:** Consult with a doctor about appropriate allergy medications if needed.

Be Cautious During Spring Cleaning

Many seniors take advantage of spring to clean and organize their homes. While this is a great time to declutter, it's essential to do so safely. Use sturdy ladders, with a handle that pops up when opened, for reaching high places, and don't lift heavy items alone. Instead, ask family members or friends for help. Also, be sure to wear gloves and masks when handling cleaning supplies to prevent skin irritation or respiratory issues. A white vinegar and baking soda mixture is much safer.

- **Check gardening tools.** If you enjoy working out in the garden, inspect all of the gardening tools to ensure that they are still in proper working condition.
- **Maintain the yard.** To keep the yard safe, make sure that you and your loved one remove any branches, weeds, and leaves that may be lingering around from the wintertime. You should also add mulch to any flower beds to help keep them fresh.
- **Wear protection for outdoor tasks.** With the spring will come tasks such as mowing the lawn or using a leaf blower to clean the leaves. Goggles, ear protection or earplugs, and other safety equipment should be checked and in good condition.

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- **Check the patio and furniture.** You should check the patio for any loose boards or nails. You should also check that the chairs and furniture outside are safe to use for the season.
- **Test fire alarms and smoke detectors.** Ensure you are up to date on fire alarms and smoke detectors in your homes. Check the batteries and test the detectors to see if they are in proper working condition.
- **Clean the gutters.** During the winter, leaves and debris may accumulate in the gutters of the house. Enlist the help of family or friends to have them cleaned out.

Dress Appropriately for the Weather

Spring weather can be unpredictable, with temperature swings and sudden rain showers. Dress in layers to adapt to changing temperatures and always keep an umbrella handy. Non-slip and well-fitting shoes are also important, especially when walking on wet surfaces.

- **Check the forecast:** Be aware of temperature fluctuations and potential for rain, wind, or even snow.
- **Dress in layers:** Prepare for varying temperatures by wearing layered clothing that can be easily added to or removed.
- **Be cautious on wet surfaces:** Spring showers can make surfaces slippery, so wear shoes that envelop the entire foot with good traction and take your time when walking.
- **Prepare for storms:** Have a plan in place for severe weather, including where to seek shelter.
- **Bring an extra layer of clothing.** In the spring, it can be warm or cold. In some regions, it may even snow during the early weeks of spring. Keep an extra layer of clothing wherever you go in case the temperature changes.

Maintain Your Physical Activity

Spring is a perfect time to enjoy outdoor activities, which can greatly benefit both physical and mental health. Whether it's gardening, walking, or participating in community events, staying active is vital. However, seniors should listen to their bodies and take rest breaks as needed. Consider joining a local walking group or fitness class for companionship and motivation.

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- **Engage in gentle exercise:** Walking, gardening, cycling or other activities that match your fitness level can improve both physical and mental health.
- **Enjoy the outdoors:** Spend time in nature while taking necessary precautions.
- **Eat healthy:** Enjoy fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables. Southern Ontario now has many greenhouses that produce a variety of fruits and vegetables year-round.
- **Stay connected:** Maintain social connections with friends and family.

Be Aware of Seasonal Traffic Changes

With warmer weather, more people are out and about, leading to an increase in pedestrian traffic. Always stay alert while walking, especially at intersections. If you're driving, remember that cyclists and pedestrians may be more present on the road, so drive cautiously.

- **Talk about spring safety topics.** It's important to discuss with your senior loved one some ways to be safe. These can include safe driving tips, information in case of a hurricane, first aid, and instructions on how to avoid slipping when it's wet outside. The Council on Aging offers such a reminder course.
<https://coaottawa.ca/?s=driving>
- **Prepare your car for spring.** Your loved one should keep their care up to date for the spring weather. This includes refilling the windshield wiper fluid, keeping sunglasses in the car in case of glare, and frequently checking the tire pressure when the weather changes.

Stay Socially Connected

Spring brings a multitude of community events and gatherings. Participating in these can enhance your mood and enrich your social life. Whether it's a local festival, park activities, or simply visiting family, staying connected is essential for mental well-being. If mobility is an issue, consider virtual gatherings or neighbourhood activities that allow you to engage from home.

Check Emergency Preparedness

Spring can sometimes bring severe weather, such as thunderstorms or tornadoes. Ensure your emergency kit is stocked with essentials. This should include medications, a flashlight, and non-perishable food, along

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with any necessary documents. Familiarize yourself with local weather alerts and develop a safety plan for severe weather situations.

Skin Protection:

- **Wear sunscreen:** Spring can bring about strong sunny days. Consider applying sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, even on cloudy days.
- **Wear protective clothing:** Cover up with long sleeves, pants, and a wide-brimmed hat when spending time outdoors.
- **Seek shade:** Avoid direct sunlight during peak hours (10 am to 4 pm).
- **Protect your eyes:** Wear sunglasses to shield your eyes from UV rays.

Medication Management:

- **Review medications:** Check expiration dates and refill prescriptions as needed.
- **Consult with a doctor:** If you have concerns about any medications, talk to your doctor.

In conclusion, spring is a delightful season for seniors to embrace, filled with opportunities for growth, connection, and enjoyment. By following these safety tips, seniors can confidently engage in all the beauty and activities that spring has to offer, ensuring a safe and fulfilling season.

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