

Dear customers and friends!

Winter is the most extreme time of the year for the elderly. Low air temperatures, short daylight hours, lack of sun have a negative impact even on the well-being of young people and are even more dangerous for an elderly person. In this issue, we will tell you how to improve your health in winter and prevent the risks of deterioration in the physical and mental well-being of an elderly person, as well as share the latest aged care news.

Russian Ethnic Representative Council of Victoria (Russian Aged Care)

## WHY IS THE COLD SEASON DANGEROUS FOR THE ELDERLY? HOW TO STAY HEALTHY IN WINTER?

Seniors are especially prone to dehydration because they tend to eat and drink less than younger people, thus they consume less water. In general, people feel less thirsty during the winter and do not drink as much fluid as they should. Cold, dry air also contributes to moisture loss. Experts generally recommend that older adults consume at least 1.7 liters of fluid per 24 hours. This corresponds to 57.5 fluid ounces, or 7.1 cups. Broth soups and fruits and vegetables are foods that can provide much-needed fluids to our bodies. Healthy choices of warm beverages, warm low-fat or fat-free milk, or a mug of unsweetened hot herbal tea.

Wear several thin layers, rather than one thick layer. Layers trap warm air close to the body, helping to insulate the heat. Cotton, wool or thermal clothes are ideal.

A lot of heat is lost through the head and neck, so if you're chilly indoors, try wearing a hat or scarf. If you're sitting down, a shawl or blanket will provide extra warmth. You should also try to keep your feet up, because air is cooler at ground level.

Keep your bedroom at 18C all night if possible and keep the bedroom window and door closed.

If you can't heat all the rooms in your home, make sure you keep the living room warm and heat your bedroom before going to bed. Draw your curtains, as soon as it gets dark to stop the heat escaping and the draughts coming in. Keep doors and windows closed and use draught excluders to stop cold air flowing through your home.

During winter months many elderly may find themselves feeling low and down, it can be due to reduced sunlight, shorter days, and the holidays coming to an end or they could be missing their loved ones. Brighten up the surroundings- allowing enough sunlight into the home can help brighten up the mood instantly, intake of Vitamin D from natural light works as a mood enhancer and it is also good for overall health. Getting natural light in winters can at times be a challenge, light therapy can be an option to treat SAD (seasonal affective disorder) symptoms. symptoms and other conditions by exposure to artificial light.

## WINTER SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS

In elderly adults, the flu or common cold can often lead to complications. Lifestyle changes, maintaining regular vaccinations, and improving personal hygiene habits can reduce the risk of illness.

- **Eat a balanced diet** – Eating a balanced diet is essential for older adults and is a natural way to boost mood and energy. Improved nutrition also helps prevent colds, flu and injuries that are more prevalent in cold weather. Adding plenty of natural colours to your diet with one or two seasonal fruits can be a good source of anti-oxidants.
- **Stay Active** – Exercise, while important all year round, can be vital in lifting the mood during the winter months. Physical activity such as this helps to increase the blood flow to the whole body.
- **Planning for events** – Whether looking forward to a party or celebration, or planning / redecorating for an upcoming event, it can help create positive feelings.



## AGED CARE INDUSTRY REFORM NEWS

The Australian Government has postponed the launch of a new elderly care program called “Support at Home” from July 2024 to July 2025

In-home aged care currently consists of several programs that have different approaches to assessment, eligibility, service providers, funding and fees. As a result, not everyone receives care commensurate with their needs and funding is not always used effectively across the aged care system and for individual consumers.

The Australian Government has developed the reform to home care that is expected to consolidate a number of existing programs under a single assessment and funding model. Government declared its commitment to establish a new Support at Home Program in consultation with senior Australians and community stakeholders.

Support at Home will start in July 2025 and replace the following existing programs:

1. Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)
2. Home Care Packages (HCP) Program
3. Short Term Restorative Care (STRC) Program.

## NEWS FROM OUR CENTRE-BASED RESPITE PROGRAM

Fine motor skills are essential to everyday living, and these skills may start to deteriorate as one ages. That’s why keeping them in check through regular activity is important. Visitors of the Centre Based Respite program are offered to practice activities to improve hand and finger mobility, coordination, and strength, practicing drawing, knitting, and other various tasks. We are proud of the work of our program visitors and would like to share the results with you.



**You can always call us on 03 9415 6899 or email to [chsp@rerc.org.au](mailto:chsp@rerc.org.au)**