

MATURE living



Four tips to stay safe this winter

It's important to stay safe during the winter, especially if your mobility is reduced. Follow these tips to avoid injury and be ready for the snowstorms ahead.

1. REGULARLY REMOVE SNOW

Keep your stairs and walkways clear.



It's best to hire a professional to remove your snow, but if you're in good health and you prefer to do the shovelling yourself, be sure to stay safe by following these suggestions:

- Dress appropriately and in layers
- Take your time — rushing can lead to injury
- Clear small amounts of snow often; don't wait until a lot has accumulated
- If possible, push the snow rather than lift it
- Use abrasives like salt and sand to avoid falling
- Don't overexert yourself and be sure to take frequent breaks

2. CLEAR ICE AND SNOW FROM YOUR ROOF

If you notice a lot of snow on top of your house, or large icicles hanging from your gutters, let the professionals handle it. A snow removal com-

pany will be able to safely remove the snow from your roof, and a roofing company can tell you if those icicles are a sign that your roof is damaged.

3. GET YOUR CAR READY

Take your car to a mechanic for a checkup and install winter tires. Make sure your windshield washer fluid is designated for cold temperatures, and always have an ice scraper, jumper cables and an emergency kit in your trunk.

4. INSPECT YOUR APPLIANCES

Make sure your furnace is working well, and check that your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are likewise in good condition.

In addition to all the above, if a snowstorm is on the horizon, don't take any chances — stay home and wait for better weather to return.

Why you should become a homestay host

Now that your kids have moved out and you've stopped working, does your home feel like it's too big? Would you be happy to have some company and a bit of extra help around the house? Then consider becoming a homestay host for an international student. Welcoming a young person into your home can be a rewarding experience that you benefit from as much as your guest.

WHAT YOU GIVE
As a host, you'll provide a private room, access to a bathroom and kitchen, and possibly cooked meals. You'll also be expected to integrate the student into your life. This means including them in family events and outings. These people are staying with you to practise their English and learn about Canadian culture. They rely on you to help them.

WHY YOU'LL BENEFIT
Students are expected to integrate themselves into the lives of their hosts. This means that they can help out with household tasks such as tidying up the kitchen and shovelling the driveway after a snowstorm. Host families are often compensated for having people stay in their homes but you'll benefit more from the experience than the money.

HOW TO BECOME A HOST
The best way to become a homestay host is to go through an agency. There are many different organizations in Canada that place students with hosts such as Yes Canada and the Canada Homestay Network. If you're interested in the experience, contact an agency and get ready to soon welcome a new member to your household.



Volunteer work: the feel-good way to spread holiday cheer

Is the spirit of the season inspiring you to spread goodwill and be more charitable? If you've got a bit of time to spare and the inclination to do so, why not give back to your community? Over the holiday season, homeless shelters, hospitals and local organizations need volunteers more than ever. You don't have to look far to find ways to do good works and there are countless

opportunities to help others. Some ways you can give back include:

- Wrapping gifts to raise money for charity
- Preparing, serving and delivering meals on Christmas or New Year's Day
- Collecting donations for food banks or toy drives
- Visiting people who are alone
- Answering letters to Santa Claus



No matter whether you want to help children in need or provide company to lonely senior citizens, the holiday season is the best time to get involved in your community. Your local charitable organizations will be happy for the help.

Sleeping in separate rooms: the key to a happier relationship

Increasingly, long-term partners in a marriage or other type of primary relationship are moving into their own bedrooms. But this doesn't mean the relationship is in trouble. To the contrary, sleeping in separate bedrooms can play a big part in bringing couples closer together.

SOUNDER SLEEP

Is there anything worse than sharing a bed with someone who snores? Or who can't stop tossing and turning? Being kept awake by the nocturnal quirks of your significant other, or by a spouse who comes to bed late or gets out of bed early, can lead to tiredness, irritation and possibly arguments.

Even more significant is that lack of sleep can cause health problems such as high blood pressure, headaches and anxiety.

Sleeping in separate rooms can allow those in couples who experience sleep difficulties to get the rest they so desperately need. Irritability and arguments caused by fatigue start to disappear and associated health problems begin to diminish.

BETTER SEX

If you're worried that sleeping in a different bedroom than your significant other will sabotage your sex life, don't. It won't disappear simply because you're getting your shut-eye in the next room. In fact, many couples that make the move report that their desire for their partner increases. Couples can have "date nights" in one room or the other, and then sleep comfortably in their own bed at the end of the night.

If you're having trouble sleeping because of your partner, moving into your own bedroom may be the perfect solution.



Turkey and mushroom casserole

INGREDIENTS
(Makes 4 to 6 servings)

- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tbsps. vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tbsps. butter
- 2 tbsps. flour
- 1 (8 oz.) package of white or brown mushrooms, quartered
- 4 cups cooked pasta or egg noodles
- 1/2 cup diced turkey leftovers
- Salt and pepper
- 1-1/2 cups grated cheese (mozzarella, cheddar or Swiss)

DIRECTIONS

1. One hour before you start cooking, mix the garlic and milk together, then refrigerate.
2. Preheat the oven to 190 °C (375 °F).
3. In a large skillet, heat half of the vegetable oil and sauté the onions for five to seven minutes on low heat, but don't let them brown.
4. At the same time, melt the butter over low heat in a small pot and add the flour. Cook

Here's an excellent way to put your turkey leftovers to good use! If you have peas or corn left over as well, throw them in the skillet along with the other ingredients. A hearty, delicious and affordable meal — what more could you ask for?

for one to two minutes while stirring with a whisk. After removing and discarding the garlic from the refrigerated mixture, slowly add the milk and continue to whisk until you obtain a smooth béchamel-like sauce.

5. Remove the onions from the skillet and slightly increase the heat. Add the rest of the vegetable oil and the mushrooms. Sauté for five to seven minutes, until the mushrooms look golden brown.
6. Throw the onions back in the skillet. Add the noodles, turkey and béchamel sauce, and mix well. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper, to taste.
7. Pour the contents into an oven-safe casserole dish and sprinkle cheese on top.
8. Place the dish in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the cheese has melted and browned, then serve!

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