

- Do light exercises to keep up circulation.** Clap your hands and move your arms and legs occasionally. Try not to stay in one position for too long.
- If more than one person is in the vehicle, take turns sleeping.** One of the first signs of hypothermia is sleepiness. If you are not awakened periodically to increase body temperature and circulation, you can freeze to death.
- Huddle together for warmth.** Use newspapers, maps, and even the removable floor mats for added insulation. Layering items will help trap more body heat.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.** Severe cold can cause numbness, making you unaware of possible danger. Keep fingers and toes moving for circulation, and drink warm broth to reduce the risk of further injury.
- Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.** Bulky winter clothing can cause you to sweat, but cold dry air will help the sweat evaporate, making you unaware of possible dehydration. When people are dehydrated, they are more susceptible to the ill effects of cold and to heart attacks.
- Avoid overexertion.** Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise, such as shoveling snow or pushing a vehicle, can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.

What to Do After a Winter Storm

CORE ACTION MESSAGES

- Stay informed.
- Avoid travel.
- Avoid overexertion.

You should:

- **Keep listening to a local radio or television station or NOAA Weather Radio for updated information and instructions.** Access to some parts of the community may be limited or roads may be blocked.
- **Help people who require special assistance**—infants, elderly people, those without transportation, large families who may need additional help in an emergency situation, people with disabilities, and the people who care for them.
- **Avoid driving and other travel until conditions have improved.** Roads may be blocked by snow or emergency vehicles.
- **Avoid overexertion.** Heart attacks from shoveling heavy snow are a leading cause of death during the winter.
- **Keep up with local weather forecasts and be prepared when you go outside.** Major winter storms are often followed by even colder conditions.
- **Check on your animals and ensure that their access to food and water is unimpeded by drifted snow, ice, or other obstacles.**

For information on portable-generator safety and carbon monoxide poisoning, see Appendix: Portable Generators.