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Don't Slip and Slide

- Stay Safe in the Snow with Top Tips from the British Chiropractic Association -

With temperatures in the UK on par with the Arctic, snow showers are a chance for some well deserved outdoor fun, but accident & emergency services are reporting a significant rise in the number of ice and snow-related injuries because of the weather. To ensure everyone can stay safe in the snow and avoid injury, **Tim Hutchful from the British Chiropractic Association**, offers some top tips to stay safe in the snow:

- **Best Foot Forward**

It is a good idea to have two pairs of shoes, one for walking in the snow, the other for either driving or walking around the office. A waterproof shoe is preferable for outside, one that gives you support (like a walking shoe), has a grippy sole and can be laced supportively around the foot and ankle.

Whilst wellingtons can be practical, they often don't give you enough support and can be difficult to take off. Avoid walking outside in leather soled shoes and, if you are driving, change your shoes if possible so your feet do not slip on the pedals.

- **Top Gear**

Clothing should be warm and allow you to move freely. Avoid things in your pockets that may do you harm if you do fall. An ideal jacket length should be to just below your waist and on the hips, but make sure it doesn't impede your walking; if you fall, you will be thankful for the extra padding.

In addition to keeping you warm, hats and gloves can also act as padding should you fall. A hat can act a bit like a crash helmet and reduce the force of any knock to the head. Likewise, when wearing gloves, you are less likely to have your hands in your pockets, which may help you if were to slip.

- **Falling Gracefully**

If you do fall, try and curl up and 'roll' with the fall and stay relaxed, this will minimise any jarring to your body. Whilst it may be an automatic reaction, try to avoid putting your hands out to save you - this may cause wrist injuries.

- **Keep Your Wits**

It goes without saying, try to avoid alcohol. Not only will you be more prone to feeling the adverse effects of the cold (because it causes loss of body heat) but it may also cause you to take risks that you wouldn't normally do

and, of course, make you more unsteady on your feet. Keep topped up with warm drinks to keep your temperature up.

- **Plan, Plan, Plan**

Plan what you need to do, especially if it involves travelling anywhere. Avoid walking too near the edge of the pavement to avoid slipping into traffic. Be patient, don't hurry and watch out for parts of the pavement that may have been in shadow or under trees, where there is more likely be black ice.

- **Travelling by Car**

Getting the car off the drive can be a problem so, if possible, sort out your garage and put the car away. If you do have to scrape the ice off your car, make sure that you have the correct implements. Stand on a stable surface and do not over stretch.

- **Safe Shovelling**

Whilst very satisfying, clearing snow can be a very strenuous task. Make sure you bend your knees and keep your back straight, don't twist too much as any "unaccustomed activity" may cause injury, if in doubt, put some salt or grit down instead.

Remember if you do fall make sure you get checked over as soon as possible, especially if you hit your head.

Enjoy the snow but keep warm and try to stay as safe as possible.

For more information call the BCA on 0118 950 5950 or visit www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk where there is practical advice to help avoid back problems and improve posture.

Ends

BCA press enquiries – Sasha Mattus/ Sara Bailey/ Julie Doyle @ Publicasity

Tel: 020 7632 2400

Email: bca@publicasity.co.uk

Notes to editors

British Chiropractic Association

Chiropractic is a primary health-care profession that specialises in the diagnosis, treatment and overall management of conditions that are due to problems with the joints, ligaments, tendons and nerves of the body, particularly those of the spine.

*The **BCA** represents well over 50% of UK chiropractors. Chiropractic is a statutorily regulated healthcare profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council. Members of the BCA must abide by the GCC's Code of Conduct and Standard of Proficiency. The association only accepts graduates who have gone through a minimum four-year full-time internationally accredited degree course at an internationally recognised college of chiropractic education. Chiropractic care offers hands on pain management and focuses on muscles, joints and nerves. Chiropractic is suitable for all ages and can help with a wide range of aches and pains from head to toe. Chiropractors use their hands to 'adjust' or 'manipulate' the spine and joints where signs of restriction in movement are found and can also involve working on muscles. This restores normal function to the affected muscles, joints and nerves allowing the body to then get on with the job of healing itself.*