

# [News story: Cold weather health warnings issued by PHE](#)

## **Latest update**

**Tuesday 29 January 2019**

An incoming band of cold weather, with the potential for snow, has prompted warnings from Public Health England (PHE) to look out for those most at-risk.

Over the past few weeks temperatures across the country have been low. Now Met Office forecasters say that this week some parts could see snow and everywhere will continue to see cold temperatures.

These warnings have prompted PHE scientists to warn people to prepare for the bad weather now and to keep a careful eye on forecasts. Every winter thousands of people die from illnesses linked to exposure to the cold when indoor and outside.

Dr Emer O'Connell, Public Health Consultant with PHE said:

With continued cold weather forecast, now is the time to prepare and look out for those most at risk of falling ill.

If you can, check on family, friends and neighbours who are older, have heart and lung conditions or young children as all these groups are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cold.

Steve Ramsdale, Chief Operational Meteorologist at the Met Office, said:

Snow and wintry showers are expected to affect many parts of the country on Tuesday 29 January. The main accumulations are likely to be over high ground in Wales and the north and west of England where 2 to 5 cm is likely in places.

Elsewhere, whilst some snow may fall there is less likely to be any significant accumulations though parts of East Anglia and the high ground of Surrey, Sussex and Kent may see 1 to 3 cm. It will remain cold and unsettled for the rest of this week, temperatures could fall quite widely to minus 3 or minus 4 degrees overnight, with a mix of rain snow and ice, particularly on Thursday (31 January).

Further information is included in PHE's [tips to help you to prepare for cold weather](#).

# Previous updates

## 12 December 2018

With many parts of England forecast to receive their first bout of cold this winter, Public Health England (PHE) is today (12 December 2018) issuing weather warnings.

The [Met Office](#) has forecast a short spell of cold for the northeast, north west, Yorkshire and Humber, East Midlands, and West Midlands. The cold, which could drop below zero degrees in many places, could also trigger some snowfall, but it is not certain where.

As a result, PHE is urging people all over the country to think about what they can do to keep warm and well during the cold.

Dr Owen Landeg of Public Health England, said:

This cold is likely to arrive late on Thursday and into Friday. Before then it's really important to think about what you can do to prepare and protect more vulnerable friends and family from the ill-effects of the cold.

It is best to wear lots of thin layers, have plenty of warm food and drinks to stay warm, and check weather forecasts before heading out. Also, wear shoes with a good, slip-resistant grip to prevent any accidental falls.

When indoors, stay warm, heat homes to at least 18°C, and keep up-to-date with the weather forecast – all of this is particularly important if anyone in the home is very young, 65 or over or has a long-term heart or lung condition, as they can feel the ill-effects of cold more than the rest of us.

Frank Saunders, Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office said:

It's going to be cold over the next few days, with temperatures for many parts limited to between 3 and 6°C through the day.

Many of us will wake up to a frost on Friday and Saturday morning, before wet and windy weather moves in later on Saturday.

To prepare for cold weather:

- look out for friends and family who may be vulnerable to the cold, and ensure they have access to warm food and drinks and are managing to heat their homes adequately
- try to maintain indoor temperatures to at least 18°C, particularly if you are not mobile, have a long-term illness or are 65 or over. When

temperatures are at 18C we start to see changes in the body, when the blood starts to thicken and this can cause clotting. Clotting can cause problems and is one of the reasons we see more heart attacks and strokes in the days following colder weather

- stay up to date with the latest weather forecasts on the [Met Office website](#)
- if eligible, seek entitlements and benefits – [power and utility companies have schemes](#) have schemes which make at-risk groups a priority for reconnection following power cuts
- avoid exposing yourself to cold or icy outdoor conditions if you are at a higher risk of cold-related illness or falls
- discuss with your friends and neighbours the need to clear snow and ice from in front of your house and public walkways nearby

[Stay Well This Winter](#) contains useful advice on staying warm this winter.