

# The Winter Vortex and Fall Risks

## **According to the Centers for Disease Control:**

- \* 1 out of 3 older adults (65 and older) fall each year but less than ½ talk to their health care providers about it.
- \* Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries.
- \* 20-30% of people who fall suffer moderate to severe injuries such as lacerations, hip fractures or head traumas.

## **Steps to Help Prevent Falls During Winter Weather:**

- \* Wear shoes or boots with rubber soles for more solid footing.
- \* Always use handrails when going up or down steps; turn lights on.
- \* Keep your porch, deck, walkways and driveway clear of snow and ice.
- \* Try to limit walking to areas that have been cleared off.
- \* Take shorter steps to maintain your center of balance; keep hands free, arms help maintain balance.
- \* Slow down, take your time.
- \* Be careful when getting into the car.
- \* Use your cane, walker or other assist device; walk with someone.
- \* When out in public look carefully at the floor surface; if there is carpet, stay on it whenever you can.
- \* Maintain an exercise program when inside the house.
- \* Always keep a cell phone or electronic medical alert device/systems with you – even when walking to the mailbox – so 911 can be called immediately.