



Working and Traveling Off Premises

Employees traveling on business away from your health care facility are presented with unique slip and fall exposures. While salting and snow removal procedures can be controlled at your own site, employees traveling offsite can find themselves facing hazardous conditions when they reach their final destination.

Many health care personnel traveling on business encounter parking lots, sidewalks and steps covered with snow and ice. Here are a few tips to consider to reduce slip and fall injuries while traveling offsite.

- **Parking:** Park in a location as close to your final destination as possible that reduces the exposure to walking on snow and ice. Look for a covered parking structure whenever possible or a lot where snow plowing and salt application has been completed.

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Useful Resources

Links to Slip Resistant Footwear:

www.ShoeIceCleats.com
www.ShoesForCrews.com

Link to Laptop Carrying Carts:

<http://www.google.com/products?q=rolling+laptop+cases&hl=en>
<http://www.google.com/products?q=rolling+laptop+carrying+cart&hl=en>

- **Exiting a Vehicle:** Many slip and fall injuries take place next to vehicles. When exiting your car, scan the area where you will be parking for snow and ice accumulation. Remember that black ice under a light snow can be very slippery. If you are in a car or light truck, open the door and swivel both of your legs to stand up on both at the same time for more balance. Hang onto the door for stability.
- **Exiting a Large Truck:** Maintain three points-of-contact as you descend from the truck. Face the truck, using the hand holds and steps, taking extra time to prevent a fall.
- **Walk Like a Penguin:** When walking on slippery surfaces, keep your feet shoulder-width apart and take shorter steps to maintain better balance.
- **Travel Path:** Walk in designated walkways as much as possible, scanning the travel path in front of you. Avoid shortcuts through landscaping, over snow piles and areas where snow and ice removal has not been completed.
Carrying Laptops & Materials: Consider the amount and weight of items being carried, as they can shift your balance and cause you to fall. Use a rolling bag or backpack whenever possible.
- When visiting clients at their residence, scan the travel path ahead. Wear boots or other non-slip footwear and keep a small shovel in your trunk to clear a path up the steps or near the door, if needed. Use ice melters to improve the travel path.
- **Steps and Handrails:** Try to avoid carrying items with your hands. If possible, use a carrying case with a shoulder strap and maintain contact with handrails as you ascend or descend steps.
- **Footwear:** Select and use footwear appropriate for walking in winter weather conditions. Keep an extra pair of shoes and change from boots to dress shoes once inside. Shoe cover ice grippers will provide additional traction as well.
- **Entering Buildings:** Remove snow and water from footwear to prevent creating wet, slippery conditions indoors.

For more information on this topic and more, visit UnitedHeartland.com/walksafe or contact your UH Loss Control representative today.

