



Dressing for warmth

DLF Factsheet

Sponsored by

ADAPTAwear
clothing for care

There's no longer a need to struggle with dressing! **ADAPTAWear**
clothing for care

Call Us On **0845 643 9492**

Designed for independent dressing and dressing by carers, we offer unique functional clothing solutions for dressing, toileting and bedtime.



We do it all!

- Side opening trousers
- Magnetic shirts
- Back opening nighties
- Even front fastening bras and lots more!

Call us today and ask about our new alterations service.



Design by wagraphicdesigns.com

For more information or to request a brochure
Call us on **0845 643 9492**

www.adaptawear.co.uk

© Disabled Living Foundation
All rights reserved. No reproduction or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission. Inclusion (including any display advertising) does not indicate that any item has been recommended or tested. All information is provided without legal responsibility.

Disabled Living Foundation
380-384 Harrow Road London W9 2HU
Tel: (020) 7289 6111
Fax: (020) 7266 2922
Helpline: 0845 130 9177 – 10 am to 4 pm
Textphone: (020) 7432 8009
Email: advice@dlf.org.uk
Website: www.dlf.org.uk
Reg Charity No: 290069
VAT Reg No: 226 9253 54

Contents

Dressing for warmth

INTRODUCTION	4
MICRO-ENVIRONMENT	4
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	4
HOW CLOTHING CAN HELP	5
FABRIC	5
SIMPLE, PRACTICAL ADVICE	6
USEFUL ORGANISATIONS	7

INTRODUCTION

Older people, the very young and those with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to the cold. When considering ways to keep warm, the role of clothing must be considered together with methods of heating, life style, finance and the general environment. Where people try to keep warm simply by maintaining a room temperature, expenditure on heating can be considerable and other occupants who are not so susceptible to the cold can feel uncomfortably warm.

Dressing for warmth should be practised from the start of cooler days if it is to be of real benefit later in the year. Not only will it make a substantial difference to someone's ability to be comfortable during a cold spell but it will also makes a positive contribution to preventing the development of sub-clinical hypothermia.

At night, body temperature control mechanisms are at their least stable, and room heating is often switched off. Bedding absorbs considerable moisture from the air during each day, even though it is slept in each night. If a person sleeps in an unheated bed their body heat will be required to evaporate that moisture. Hot water bottles or electric blankets should be used to warm the bed for a couple of hours before it is used. An electric overblanket costs the same to run all night as boiling a kettle each night to fill a hot water

People can lose a lot of body heat both during dressing and undressing especially if this is done in a room which hasn't heated up properly or which has been allowed to cool down before you go to bed. When someone undresses the warm insulating layer of air round the body is lost and body heat has to be used to warm the new layer.

MICRO-ENVIRONMENT

One of the best ways of preventing hypothermia is to create a micro-environment or a warm corner within a room. A high screen placed around a chair, preferably one with both a high back and wings, will reduce draughts and encourage reflected heat. If lighting is adequate try to close curtains at dusk to improve insulation. The benefits of this warm corner can be further enhanced by careful clothing choice to make getting dressed as quick as possible and the clothing worn to be as insulating as possible.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Disability Rights Handbook (2005-2006) states that:

A clothing allowance of £169 a year is payable if you receive war pensioned disablement benefit, and your disability causes exceptional wear and tear to your clothing, e.g. because of incontinence or the use of an artificial limb.

Those who are eligible for income support or pension credit may be eligible for a social fund grant for extra clothing if it is essential to maintain independent living.

If you are eligible for a budgeting loan this can be used to help you to buy clothing and footwear. To apply for a loan, see form SF500 available from Jobcentre Plus offices or from the Benefit Enquiry Line.

Contact the 'Benefit Entitlement Check' service to find out if you are eligible for any winter fuel allowances or a heating rebate.

The government sponsored Warm Front Scheme is designed to help people who are over 60 or disabled or who live with someone who is over 60 or disabled, to keep warm in their homes in winter. They offer advice, insulation and grants.

Your local Age Concern or Citizens Advice Bureau will be able to give you advice on benefits and local schemes that could help keep your home warm.

HOW CLOTHING CAN HELP

Clothing keeps people warm by acting as an insulator or, more accurately, by enabling air to act as that insulator. A garment traps air between it and the skin. This is then warmed by body heat and prevents further heat loss.

Clothing generally cannot create warmth; it can only maintain your body warmth, so

movement and exercise are important to generate that warmth before you dress.

To be really warm it is not just a question of donning gloves and socks. The whole body needs to be insulated. While warm hands and feet may be the key to feeling comfortable, body warmth is actually achieved by keeping the trunk and limbs well covered.

Potentially one of the most dangerous misconceptions about keeping warm is that this is automatically achieved by wearing several layers of clothes. It is actually possible for several thick layers to keep someone less warm than several light fluffy layers. Heavy layers of clothes will have minimal amounts of air trapped between them because the weight of each layer pushes the air out.

The older clothes are, the less warm they are, as a fabric becomes both compressed, compacted and heavier with age. Very old jackets and coats were made with much heavier linings and interlinings than are used today and so do not keep people as warm.

FABRIC

It is not only what is worn but the fabric from which it is made and how that fabric has been constructed which determines how warm it keeps someone. Inside the home, fluffy knitted garments are both warm and comfortable. Outside in cold weather the same garment is useless as it allows even

the slightest breeze to penetrate so that the wearer gets cold very quickly.

Wool, though very warm, may be difficult to wash, expensive and relatively heavy. Garments made with acrylic fibres are virtually as warm, much lighter, cheaper and easier to wash. However, care must be taken when tumble drying something made of acrylic or it will lose its shape.

Any fabric with a piled, terry or textured finish should trap air between the layers and insulate against the cold. However, some corduroy or velvet fabric may look thick and warm, but check by holding it up to the light to see how closely woven the fabric is as some are very loosely woven and therefore do not trap air effectively. Closely woven fabrics like moleskin and drill will be warmer.

Jersey (knitted) fabrics in silk, cotton, viscose or synthetic fibres will trap air within their construction and therefore act as a good insulator, especially when worn layered with other garments.

Battery powered heated gloves, socks and jackets are available from specialist companies, contact your nearest clothing advice service or the Reynauds Association for suppliers.

SIMPLE, PRACTICAL ADVICE

There are many simple ways in which clothing can be used to minimise heat loss and help keep the body temperature stable

so enabling people to be safe and comfortable in a cold environment.

- First, make use of what you already have but, if possible, also buy one or two new items each winter which take full advantage of the constantly developing new advances in warm wear
- Cover as much of the body as possible, e.g. long sleeves, high necks, long trousers/tights
- The more thin layers worn the warmer the wearer will be. Long sleeved vests, long johns or combinations for both sexes. Ski departments and outdoor pursuit shops sell warm colourful versions
- Legs represent over one third of our body surface area. Trousers with a complete under layer consisting either of textured lining, long johns and socks or warm tights, will save heat
- On average 20% of heat is lost through a person's head and an older person with thin hair and less body fat over his/her skull will lose more. Wearing night caps will prevent heat loss at night, but they may not be to everyone's taste
- Dressing gowns and slippers should always be put on as soon as someone gets up, whether it is during the night or in the morning. Even the quick trip to the toilet in the middle of

the night without slippers or dressing gown could be disastrous if it results in a fall as the person may be unable to get assistance for some time. Short dressing gowns are safer for older people. Full length gowns, even though they will cover more of the legs, may cause the wearer to stumble when going up/down stairs

- When out of doors an older or disabled person may be as susceptible to the wind chill factor as a skier or cyclist who is normally recognised as being at risk. This is because they are slow moving and so exposed for longer to chilling winds. To minimise chilling, try to ensure that as much as possible of the body is covered. Hats, scarves, and gloves are essential and coats should be as wind proof as possible. Showerproof outer garments, such as raincoats and skiwear, offer a much greater resistance to the wind than a traditional winter coat or jacket. Skiwear is very light weight and well padded, but raincoats should always be worn with plenty of layers underneath

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

Benefit Enquiry Line for People with Disabilities
Department for Work and Pensions
Correspondence
Unit Room 504
The Adelphi
1-11 John Adam St
London
WC2N 6HT
Tel: (0800) 882200
Fax: (020) 7712 2386
Minicom: (0800) 243355
Website www.dwp.gov.uk

Family Fund Trust
Unit 4 Alpha Court
Monks Cross Drive
Huntington
York YO32 9WN
Tel: (0845) 130 4542
Fax: (01904) 652625
Textphone (01904) 658 085
Email: info@familyfundtrust.org.uk
Website: www.familyfundtrust.org.uk
Eases the stress on families who care for very severely disabled children under 16 by providing grants and information related to the care of the child. Grants can be given for washing machines, holidays, leisure activities, driving lessons, bedding, clothing and other items related to the care of the child.

'Benefit Entitlement Check '
Tel: 0800 072 9006

Warm Front
www.warmfront.co.uk
Tel: 0800 316 2805.

Reynauds and Scleroderma Association
112 Crewe Road
Alsager
Cheshire
ST7 2JA
Tel: 0800 9172494
www.reynauds.org.uk

Equipment and Clothing Advice Service

Contact Assist UK to find your nearest
centre.
www.assist-uk.org.uk

Clothing Advice and Information Service
The Independent Living Centre
Isca House
Haven Road
Exeter EX2 8DS
Website: www.devon.gov.uk/ilc
Contact: Philippa Greenslade

Disabled Living
Redbank House
4 St Chad's Street
Manchester
M8 8QA
Tel: 0870 770 2866
Textphone: 0870 770 5813
Fax: 0870 770 2867
Email: general.info@assist-uk.org
Website: www.assist-uk.org.uk

Clothing Workshops

Bassetlaw Fashion Services
Unit 7 Canalside Workshops
Leverton Road
Retford
Nottingham DN22 ODR
Tel: 01777 860 206
Contact: Barbara Ackley

Clothing Solutions for Disabled People
Unit 1 Jubilee Mills
30 North Street
Bradford
BD1 4EW
Tel and Fax 01274 746 739
Email: enquiries@clothingsolutions.org.uk
Website: www.clothingsolutions.org.uk
Contact: Sandra Hunt

Special Occasions Clothes
27 Donald Road
London
E13 0QF
Tel: 020 84704868

**We would like to thank the Clothing
Advice Service at the Independent
Living Centre in Exeter for
assistance in updating these
factsheets.**

Donation Form

We hope this factsheet has proven useful to you. If you would like to help the DLF continue to provide valuable information such as this, you may wish to consider making a small donation towards our work. As a charity, we rely on the generosity of the public to help us continue to help older and disabled people lead independent lives.

Your Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Please accept my gift of:

£5 £10 £20 £30 £ _____ other

Please make cheques/postal order/ CAF Voucher payable to **Disabled Living Foundation**

If you would like to make a credit card donation, please call our Fundraising Department on **020 7289 6111 (ext: 254)**, or alternatively visit our website at **www.dlf.org.uk**

giftaid it

Tick here if you are a UK taxpayer and would like the Disabled Living Foundation to reclaim the tax on all donations you have made for the 6 years prior to this year, (but no earlier than 6th April 2000) and on any future donations you make at no additional cost to yourself, until you notify us otherwise.

NB: You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations in the tax year (currently 28p for every £1 you give)

Please print out and return your completed form and cheque (if applicable) to:

**Fundraising Department, Disabled Living Foundation,
380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU**

Thank You

Please tick here if you would like to receive details on how you can help by making regular donations through your bank.

Please tick here if you would prefer not to receive further communications from the DLF.

Registered Charity No: 290069

A Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England Number: 1837993