Surviving and Thriving in Winter!

A joint presentation by
The International Office & CAPS

January 2015
Purpose of workshop

- What to expect this winter
- How to prepare yourself
- How to enjoy winter

- Your “winter experts” - Debbie, Monika and Sandra
- Share: what brings you here today? What excites/scares you about winter?
What to expect

- It’s cold and it does snow... for several months!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>(April)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average high</strong></td>
<td>31°F/0°C</td>
<td>35/2</td>
<td>47/8</td>
<td>59/15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average low</strong></td>
<td>18/-8</td>
<td>21/-6</td>
<td>31/-1</td>
<td>42/5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rain/snow</strong></td>
<td>2.1 inches</td>
<td>1.9 inches</td>
<td>2.7 inches</td>
<td>3.6 inches</td>
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- This may not sound so cold, but...
  - “Wind chill” + wind
  - “Lake effect” + lake effect snow
  - As we saw last week, it can get MUCH colder!

- Last winter was especially cold—“Polar Vortex” in January 2014
- “Hibernation”
- You will be very excited for spring and summer!
Proper clothing and accessories are essential to surviving winter in Chicago... especially if you primarily walk to class or take public transportation.

Where can I buy everything?

- Many options: consider how many years you will be in Chicago, and how much money you would like to invest in winter gear
- Most expensive: North Face, Uncle Dan’s, Columbia, Patagonia
- Middle: Eddie Bauer, LL Bean, Macy’s, Nordstrom Rack
- Least expensive: Target, Old Navy, DSW, thrift stores
- Also check zappos.com, 6pm.com and of course amazon.com
- Most stores have winter sales in January/February, so now is a good time to shop!
- Share: anywhere else you have bought winter items?
Prepare yourself!

Proper clothing (Coats)
Prepare yourself!

Proper clothing (Boots)

- Look for boots with good traction (for walking on ice!)
- Look for waterproof boots
- Uggs are not good winter boots in Chicago! They are not waterproof and have terrible traction.
Prepare yourself!

Proper clothing (Everything else)

TOP
BOTTOM
ONE-PIECE

Long underwear (generally worn under other clothes)
Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)

- SAD is a recurring depression with seasonal onset (fall or winter)
- The fall/winter-onset type, also known as "winter depression," is most common; occurs due to the decreased daylight, beginning in late fall to early winter and remit during summer months.
- The prevalence of SAD is <1%, with higher incidence in women
Clinical features and diagnosis of fall-onset/ winter SAD:

- Depressed mood late fall and winter (with no symptoms spring or summer)
- Increased sleep
- Increased appetite with carbohydrate craving
- Increased weight
- Inability to focus or think clearly
- Decreased energy and loss of interest in activities
- Irritability
- Interpersonal difficulties (especially rejection sensitivity)
- Leaden paralysis (heavy, leaden feelings in arms or legs)
SAD: Treatment Options – Light Therapy

- Light therapy is uniquely effective for fall-onset/winter SAD.
- Typical sustained response is evident within 2-4 days.
- Administrated through exposure to visible light that produces 2500 to 10,000 lux at eye level; for 10-90 minutes per day with gradual increase in duration.
- Responders to light therapy should continue treatment until sufficient daily light exposure is available through other sources, typically from springtime sun.
Light Therapy: Side Effects

- Photophobia
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Hypomania
- Insomnia

(if therapy is administered too late in the day)
SAD: Additional Treatment Options

- Pharmacotherapy (antidepressant medications either seasonal or continuous depending on the symptoms)
- Counseling
- Maintenance therapy is frequently used to prevent recurrences.
- Watch when symptoms get worse. Consult CAPS and get help!
SAD: Things you can do on your own

- You can rent light box from CAPS!
- Increase your exposure to light. Get up early to maximize daylight. Take daily outside walks (especially in nature – lake, forest preserve)
- Play in the snow! Engage in outdoor activities (skiing, ice skating, sledding, etc.)
- Increase physical exercise (outdoors or indoors)
- Enhance indoor lighting with regular lamps and fixtures; keep your blinds open; brighten your room with colors (e.g., pillows, blankets)
- If possible, set a timer on a light to go on early in the morning
- Take supplements (vitamin D)
- Spend time with friends
- Sit near the window when studying or working (if possible)
- Practice good sleeping hygiene, eat healthy foods, reduce stress
- Take time to relax (e.g. take yoga class; practice mindful breathing)
Prepare yourself!

Culture shock
What can you do?

Culture shock

- Take care of yourself – eat well, exercise, and get enough sleep
- Maintain flexibility, an open mind, and your sense of humor.
- Set realistic, short-term goals. Expect that you will make mistakes and not everything will go smoothly
- Do not judge the people only by stereotypes, or by the one person with whom you have had trouble – be open minded and try again
- Cultivate the habit of listening and observing without judgment
- Remember that other people’s different conceptions of time, manners, privacy, humor, etc. are just that - different, not inferior or superior
- Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences in order to deepen your understanding of your experiences. Journaling is a great way to do that
What can you do?

Culture shock

- Realize that what you are going through is normal, and temporary
- Be patient and gentle with yourself. This is a journey and you are learning about yourself at every step. Don’t expect yourself to be perfect. Connect to your values and what’s important to you – there is a reason you chose that experience
- Get involved! Join organizations, come to events organized by your department. Meet people!
- Don’t wait to get invited – organize social event yourself (e.g., movie night or dinner) and invite others!
- Talk to your peers. The chances are you are not the only one who this experience. Get support from family, friends, including professional help if needed. It’s ok to ask for help.
- Explore Chicago and Evanston!
• CAPS is located at 633 Searle, 2nd Floor. Hours 8:30-5:00pm daily. 24h crisis services and daily walk-in crisis hours

• Free individual and group counseling as well as medication evaluation and management

• Stress Clinic:
  • Drop in meditation Mondays from 3:30-4:00 p.m)
  • Drop in hour for relaxation:
    • Mondays, 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m;
    • Wednesdays, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m; Fridays, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
  • Introduction to Mindfulness: Tuesdays 12-1pm
  • Relaxation and Biofeedback:
    • Group I Mondays 2-3pm, Jan. 12, 26, Feb. 2, 9
    • Group II: Mondays 2-3pm, Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 2, 9

• Let’s Talk
  • Informal, friendly, confidential consultation with a counselor (no appt necessary)
  • Mondays 1-3pm International Office
  • Wednesdays 11am-1pm Norris Center
  • Wednesdays 1-3pm MSA (English and Spanish)
Enjoy winter!

- The best way to THRIVE in the winter is to enjoy it! It’s very tempting to hibernate, but getting out and doing things will help you enjoy winter more.
- Embrace the new cultural experience! Send your family and friends back home pictures of the snow or funny winter outfits!
- Winter can be really beautiful, too!
- We have some ideas... many more out there.
Enjoy winter!

IO events

- Brown Bag series: Winter Quarter is all about exploring Chicago
- Super Bowl workshop: 1/30
- NU Men’s Basketball outing (1/31)
- Ice skate with the IO! 2/2 in Evanston and 2/25 in Chicago
- More events to come!
- Check out our events flier for more info + read our weekly emails
• Rent skis, skates, snowshoes etc. from Norris Outdoors
• You’re never too old to build a snowman or have a snowball fight!
• Go to Madison/Milwaukee/somewhere nearby (by train/bus/car)
• Chicago Restaurant Week or visit a restaurant with a fireplace
• Exercise!!!
• Catch up on Oscar movies—this is the best time of year for American films
• Start a tradition (annual chili cookoff, Xbox tournament, etc)
• Even more: check out these websites for ideas
  • PlanIt Purple: NU events
  • Timeoutchicago.com
  • Metromix
  • RedEye Chicago
  • Chicagoist.com
  • Chicagoreader.com
• Share: other ideas
Questions?