Winter Safety: Commuting in Snowy Conditions

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Importance of Winter Safety

- Unintentional falling the leading cause of nonfatal injury across most age groups [1]
- More than 800,000 Americans hospitalized annually due to fall injuries
- Over 116,000 Americans injured yearly in winter car accidents [2]

Image taken from: https://www.travelers.com/resources/auto/safe-driving/winter-driving-safety-tips
Pedestrian Safety

- Wear proper footwear: heavy-treaded shoe with flat bottom to maximize ground contact.
- Use eyes and ears: avoid listening to music and communicating on cell phone while walking.
- Walk slowly and be cautious when shifting weight (e.g., stepping off a curb, walking over an obstacle, etc.).
- Keep hands out of pockets in case of fall.

Image taken from: http://www.you-be-fit.com/2015/12/21/ways-to-step-up-your-walking-game-this-winter/

Bicycle Safety

- Wear multiple layers of clothing when commuting during winter months.
- Lower tire pressure for added stability (15 psi or less), and consider fitting studded tires.
- Pack extra riding gear (socks, gloves, etc.).

Image taken from: https://www.bicycling.com/training/tips/9-dos-and-donts-of-winter-cycling/slide/7
Driving Safety

- Accelerate and decelerate slowly to avoid loss of traction and skids on icy roads.
- Keep a distance of 8-10 seconds from the car in front (normally 2-3 seconds).
- Steer into the direction of travel in event of a skid.
- Brake and accelerate gently – do not rely on ABS to stop your car from sliding.

Case Study

- March 2014, 104 car pileup on Interstate 25.
- 1 person killed, 30 injured.
- Half mile stretch of crashed cars.
- Cause: drivers going too fast for adverse conditions and tailgating too closely.


Image taken from: https://www.denverpost.com/2014/03/01/i-25-pileup-104-vehicles-involved-1-killed-30-hospitalized-after-snowy-disaster/
References