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## **ICE GOT YOU DOWN? CHESAPEAKE HAND OFFERS SURVIVAL TIPS FOR MAINTAINING WINTER SAFETY**

*Distal radius fractures are typical from falls on ice, according to Peter Innis, M.D.*

Baltimore, MD (February 21, 2011) – When it comes to safely navigating through wintry weather conditions - be it driving or walking - the presence of icy roads and walkways are typically more hazardous than ones covered with freshly fallen or existing snow. But, according to Peter Innis, M.D. of Greater Chesapeake Hand Specialists, (GCHS), a Hand Surgery/Orthopedic group based in Lutherville, falling on ice and suffering an injury does not have to be a foregone conclusion if you follow certain tips.

“This is the time of year when we are seeing and treating an assortment of sprains and fractures due to falls on the ice. There are measures that one can take to minimize the chances of a fall and injury.” explained Dr. Innis. “Although scaphoid fractures are the most common wrist carpal bone fractures, distal radius fractures are what typically happens in a fall on the ice”, he added.

Dr. Innis lists tips to help avoid falls onto ice:

- wear proper footwear before attempting to walk on ice
- choose paths that are completely cleared or contain hard-packed snow
- walk defensive-minded and be thinking ahead how you will brace a fall
- bend your knees while walking to lower your center of gravity
- do not burden yourself with holding objects in your arms or hands
- if you must hold something, put it in your dominant hand so you can brace any fall with your “off-hand”
- resist the urge to brace any fall with your outstretched hand
- try to fall forwards or sideways, rather than backwards

Should an unfortunate fall onto ice occur, take the immediate following steps.

- remain calm and make an immediate damage assessment of the injury and determine if professional medical attention is needed
- if the hand or wrist appears to be broken, attempt to immobilize it with the use of a splint
- cover any exposed bone with a gauze or towel to help avoid possible infection
- apply ice to the injured area but only for 20 minutes at a time and not directly to the skin
- visit the emergency room or a hand or wrist specialist

Innis adds that many winter injuries occur during sports activities such as ice skating, skiing and snowboarding. “Injury prevention is typically tied to one’s ability to control speed and remain in control when participating in an activity and not taking unnecessary chances,” he explained. “The use of proper equipment, including pads and well-insulated gloves or mittens, is important to remember. If you happen to fall, do the best you can do get out of harm’s way so the injury does not become worse,” Dr. Innis added.

Founded in 1987 and based in Lutherville, MD, Greater Chesapeake Hand Specialists, P.A. focuses on providing successful outcomes for the entire spectrum of problems associated with the hand, wrist, elbow and shoulder. The practice group, which consists of nine full-time physicians, maintains seven satellite locations throughout Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Howard and Talbot counties, as well as Baltimore City. For more information visit [www.chesapeakehand.com](http://www.chesapeakehand.com)